

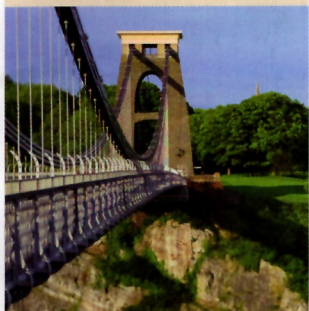
CBW

Number One
For PSV Professionals

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At last...

We take a look at East Lancs' first new bus for seven years **page 6**



Hands up if you want lower emissions

Making London a Low Emission Zone would cut down pollution from heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches. How might this affect you? Visit tfl.gov.uk/low-emission-zone or call **08457 224 577** to get more information. Tell us what you think before the consultation ends on 24 April.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Transport for London



CBW

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BSOG for coaches...

Whatever you were charging for theatre and shopping trips into London, you may soon have to charge an extra £4 a seat.

2008 sees the start of the Low Emission Zone scheme, which sets a minimum Euro III standard for PSVs entering any of London's 33 boroughs. If your vehicles is Euro II or lower, you'll need to pay a £200 fee... or risk a £1,000 fine.

It's one of those 'Good Thing' policies against which it is hard to argue. London's air quality is among the worst in Europe, leading to not only lung complaints but the degradation of some of our most beautiful historic buildings. The only businesses to suffer will be the transport sector and window cleaners.

The CPT fought very effectively against the Good Thing, achieving common sense objectives and compromises. Although we should be concerned for the minority of operators with sub-Euro II vehicles, it has to be said that the fee will only balance the competitive advantage they have in trading with lower-value assets.

So we've gone along with this. It's now time for the Government to give something back. CBW would like to see the Bus Service Operator's Grant - fuel tax rebate to you and I - extended to ALL coach services.

If air quality and emissions objectives are the purpose, it makes no sense whatever to offer bus passengers this tax break and not coach passengers, whose transport emissions equate to 500 passenger miles per gallon. How can it be right that aircraft, which achieve less than 20 passenger miles per gallon - pay no fuel tax at all?

Just half a pence extra duty on a gallon of petrol would deliver BSOG for everyone at no cost to the Exchequer. It is an absolute disgrace that the Government has, once again, refused to listen to the industry's arguments, and not only failed us, but failed the millions of people who travel on coaches.

Please write to me with your thoughts, and I will ensure your voice is heard.



Mark Williams

Mark Williams
Editor

Coach and Bus Week is a supporter of the following organisations:



Promoting Travel and Tourism by Coach



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this magazine please recycle it.

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Nexus still facing funding gap

Services face massive cuts as government refuses to pay up

Andrew Peace, news editor

School services in Tyne and Wear are safe for now, but Nexus will be forced to make drastic cuts to its other supported services after the government last week refused to make up the Concessionary Fares funding shortfall.

It warns that the impact this year has been reduced because the PTE will use £2m of its reserves, an option that will not be available next year.

It also warns that other regions could be badly affected, and may be unaware of impending trouble because they do not have the same information available to a passenger transport executive like Nexus. Already Brighton is known to have a deficit of £1m.

Councillor David Wood, chairman of the Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority, says, "Sadly we have no choice but to consider proposals that will mean vital services will be affected and young people must pay more to access public transport."

The government's decision came as a shock to Nexus since local MPs had been quoted as saying the deal was done. Talks are said to be continuing behind the scenes but there is no timescale set and hopes of an eventual settlement are fading.

Nexus were seeking an extra £7.3m to

meet the projected costs of the scheme, but ministers gave them £1.7m, and only then in acknowledgement of the likely impact on its light-rail Metro system of concessionary travel on buses.

This still leaves a funding gap of £5.4m. Nexus had proposed a 60% cut in school services but will instead concentrate the cuts on others while trying to reduce the impact on socially inclusive services. Hence it will cut its 'Teen Travel' scheme, doubling the cost of travel for 16-18 year olds. The region suffers one of the worst take ups in further education in the country; education chiefs are said to be horrified about the impact this move could have on the education system - the PTA is being asked to use £500k of its own reserves to keep the scheme going until the end of the summer term.

£800k will be saved by raising the child concessionary scheme from 30p to 40p; £300k will be cut on secured bus services, representing 12% of the budget - officials are currently working out how they will do this, a decision is expected in a month's time; £300k in admin savings and £200k from moving the start time for concessionary travel back to 09:30.

At the same time, Concessionary Travel is being extended to cover the Metro system.



Nexus will make an £8 annual charge to card holders to upgrade to an 'all modes' card. It says the scheme could raise them an extra £800,000 per year.

■ Although Nexus is obliged to revenue support the Quaylink hybrid service (above) for the next five years, its financial plight means it cannot contribute the extra £150,000 its partners want, placing the service under threat. Conservative Party chairman Francis Maude added his voice to the bank of criticism heaped on the under-used service, saying: "I'm concerned with the money being wasted on this new bus scheme... you have to work out where they are needed and this clearly hasn't been done here."

Council defends stance over 'phoenix company' case

Newcastle City Council says it followed correct procedures in re-allocating contracts to the 'phoenix company' that replaced Rush Travel.

Rush Travel operated five school contracts for the council until it had its licenses removed by the traffic commissioner last May. The contracts were then transferred to A Coach Company - which did not have a license of its own, and was subsequently found by the traffic commissioner to be a phoenix operation - to all intents and purposes the same company as Rush Travel. A Coach Company then sub-contracted the work to six other operators.

Operators in the north east are concerned that the council would award school contracts to an unlicensed operator and that, after

Rush Travel had its licenses revoked, the contracts had apparently not been put out for tender.

But a spokeswoman for Newcastle Council told *CBW*, "We are entirely satisfied that all contracts have been awarded correctly and properly in line with the tendering regulations."

The council says it is not obliged to advertise contracts under a certain monetary value, and that it is entitled to approach operators it believes are capable of doing the job.

It also says it knew that A Coach Company was unlicensed and would sub-contract the work.

The council also says that it carries out CRB checks on drivers and that it was satisfied all the drivers of the sub-contracted companies were clear of convictions.

Tory leader's day out

David Cameron, and a bus load of his shadow cabinet colleagues, enjoyed a day out courtesy of Hackney Community Transport recently.

The shadow leader, plus the Tory Party vice chairman, Justine Greening; Chris Grayling - shadow Secretary of State for Transport; Caroline Spelman (ODPM); Alistair Burt (Local Government Affairs and Communities); Eric Pickles (Local Government and deputy chair of the party) and Hugo Swire (Culture Media and Sport) travelled on a specially-commissioned decker courtesy of HCT - the 'social enterprise' company that was awarded school bus contracts in South Yorkshire last year.

HCT chief executive Dai Powell gave ministers an on-board presentation during a journey from a recycling project to a community builders on London's South Bank.



Travel firm warning

A Gloucester operator owed almost £1,000 by a Blackpool travel company has warned other coach operators to check 'middle men' agencies.

Gary Davies of Chauffeurhire Coaches of Chipping Sodbury says UK Travel Solutions - which has a large number of other trading entities - has given every reason including 'restructuring' to delay payment since last year, and says chasing it through a Small Claims in the County Court may not automatically result in success.

He said: "This has been ongoing now for months. We did a credit check on the company and it appears they have CCJs of £27,000 against them. What hope for small operators like ourselves to get our money?" he says.

Another operator who says he is owed £330 from work done in October last year says he's written it off as bad debt: "Needless to say we took the work in good faith

and won't be doing any more for UK Travel Solutions," said a spokesman at JVA Sunseeker of Midsomer Norton.

UK Travel Solutions is based at Solutions House in King Street, Blackpool, with registered offices in Springfield Road. It was launched in 2003 and claims to be supplying Olympic team transport.

But according to the official register of County Court Judgements, UK Travel Solutions has outstanding CCJs amounting to some £46,000, accrued since July of last year. One supplier obtained a judgement at Banbury for almost £13,000.

CBW tried to contact its CEO, Stuart Greenley, but a staff member said he was out of the office.

At the time of going to press, Mr Greenley had not returned our calls.

■ The official registry of County Court Judgements can be checked through www.registry-trust.org.uk

Go-Ahead's trim buy

Go-Ahead subsidiary the Wilts and Dorset Bus Company has bought Hants and Dorset Trim, for £4.3m.

It is a reversal of the trend for bus companies to divest themselves of trim shops. Go Ahead now has two - the other in the north east - and will combine H&D with its recently acquired paint shop, also in Southampton.

Asked why Go Ahead has bought the company, chief executive Chris Moyes told CBW, "We have had a relationship since the days of privatisation. The owner is retiring and it is based in Southampton, which is becoming a focal point for Go-Ahead in the South."

"Lots of bus companies got out of the trimming business but we have maintained a facility in the north east, and so it is quite good to have a similar one in the south."

In addition to bus refurbishment and seat re-trimming, H&D also offers accident repair services, working with a range of coach and bus operators in the region. Moyes is at pains to point out that the company will continue to offer its services to companies outside the Go Ahead group.

Briefly

■ Scotland was due to launch its Concessionary Travel scheme as CBW went to press. The scheme - to start, like in England on 1 April - allows free nationwide travel all day for all elderly and disabled passengers. The Scottish system works on direct reimbursement of cost, unlike the English system which relies on a complicated formula to pay local authorities, but has come in for criticism for escalating costs.

■ Twelve Turkish tourists have been killed in a coach accident in Italy on Monday. The vehicle was in a convoy of eight, carrying car dealers attending a conference, when it apparently failed to negotiate a bend on mountain roads and plunged down a ravine. About 30 people were on board. The Italian driver was among the dead.

■ Dorothy Skrytek, the protestor who staged a four-month protest on the top of Derby's old bus station to prevent it being demolished, has now come down - but has vowed to keep up her campaign. She claims three men shouted abuse and threw bricks at her and that police have advised her to stop the protest for her own safety. The city council says negotiations are still continuing with the developer of the new station to get the project back on track (see CBW 715).



Peter Hendy

■ TfL says recruitment for Peter Hendy's successor as managing director of surface transport will start shortly. In the meantime, Mike Western - operations director for London Buses - has taken over the role. The successful candidate will be appointed in the next few months.

Members of David Cameron's Shadow Cabinet prepare to leave Finchley Lido on an HCT double decker bus.

Photo: Tanya Lloyd



Yobs banned from buses

Leicestershire has banned 83 children from school buses following a catalogue of abuse and vandalism.

The problem is so bad that drivers are being given special training to deal with what police call "difficult situations" on the school run.

Problems include fighting, bullying, intimidation, abuse at drivers, smoking and vandalism. Headteachers in the county claim that many of the problems are caused by unsupervised children on double-decker buses, which make it easier for yobs to cause trouble. The answer, they say, is to use single-decker buses.

A Leicestershire County Council spokesman said a range of measures had been introduced, including bus escorts, CCTV cameras and guidelines to try and combat the problem.

First look at East Lancs' Esteem

New city bus is first product of new in-house design team

Andrew Peace, news editor

The first product of East Lancs' new in-house design department, the Esteem city bus, is set to be launched next month.

The department was set up in August last year around designer Matthew Morton who joined the team from Coventry University; previously East Lancs bought in this expertise.

It is the company's first new model launch since the Millennium in 1999, over 300 of which are now on the road.

The new bus will be available from launch on a range of chassis: the Scania N94 and N230 in 10.6m and 12m; the Volvo B7RLE in 12m and 12.8m and Dennis chassis from 9m up to the 12.8m Enviro 300. In time The Esteem will be available on the VDL SB120 and 200 chassis.

East Lancs says ease of access to regular service parts was a major consideration when designing the Esteem, hence LED lighting is used wherever possible, and the rear of the vehicle features a cantilevered engine door which requires minimal space to open.

The full launch will take place next month and the launch model will be the Scania 10.6m N230. Attention has been lavished on the interior - in association with lighting specialist Invertec, East Lancs says the interior, "will meet all our customers' aspirations in terms of design, ease of cleaning and maintenance."

The launch model will also incorporate climate control, cantilever seating, bonded



The Esteem is East Lancs' first new model launch since 1999

tinted glass, MTB Punt seating and a full Hanover LED Destination system.

The company is currently building an interim model - in true East Lancs tradition - featuring the Esteem front and rear on the old Millennium body. Metrobus is taking 10.6m Scania N94s and 12.9m Dennis Darts; and Thames Travel is having four 10.6m Scania N94s.

The first Esteems on the road featuring the new front and back and the new interior will go to Preston Bus, who have ordered seven 12m Scania N94s.

■ With 70% of East Lancs production now being delivered to the south of England, Salvador Caetano in Waterlooville, Hampshire, has been approved to carry out accident repair work on

the firm's 'Alusuisse' bodies.

John Horn, East Lancs sales director, says, "We believe the partnership with Salvador Caetano will not only show our commitment to providing first class service to our current customers, but prove to future customers that even though we may manufacture our vehicles some 260 miles away, we can meet their aspirations with support locally."

Horn says its partnership with North West Bus and Coach Repairs in Blackburn has been a major factor in its growth and anticipates a similar relationship with Caetano.

■ For more information contact John Horn on 01254 504150 or Wayne Allen at Salvador Caetano on 02392 258211.

Volvo's worldwide sales up 30%

Worldwide Volvo Bus sales grew by 30% last year thanks to large orders from specific markets, while sales in Europe advanced steadily, growing 5% in the last quarter of 2005, or 3% for the year as a whole.

Operating income leapt over 85% to £35m, which includes over £7m of costs relating to the closure of the company's plant in Heilbronn, Germany.

In total Volvo delivered 10,675 vehicles worldwide in 2005, compared to 8,232 in 2004. The biggest gains were made in South America, up 268% following the massive order for 1,800 buses for the Chilean Santiago Bus Rapid Transport project.

In Western Europe deliveries grew by 10%, while in Eastern Europe they fell back 2%. North American deliveries grew by 11%, and Asia 9%.

The company says its top priority for 2006

is the production of engines meeting Euro IV/V emissions requirements, but it is also focusing on improving efficiency in sales and industrial systems on a global basis, including efforts to increase the number of components purchased locally.

The outlook for 2006 is very positive - Volvo signed its largest order ever last December, for 2,000 10.5m B6R city buses for Shanghai, China. The first half will be delivered by summer 2006, the second half by summer 2007. The chassis will be provided as package modules from Volvo's plant in Sweden and assembled at the Sunwin bus plant in Shanghai, where the bodies are also being manufactured. Volvo says its order backlog currently contains 5,128 buses, compared with 4,450 in 2004.

Volvo's sales stretch around the world, including these bendy buses for Santiago, Chile





An American consortium hopes hybrid vehicles will give US school buses a lift

Hybrid schoolbus on the way

A consortium of American manufacturers aims to be the first to market a hybrid school bus. Enova Systems, a hybrid driveline supplier, and IC Corporation, the largest school bus manufacturer in the US, have signed an agreement to build the vehicle in series production. The vehicle is claimed to deliver a 40% increase in fuel economy while reducing emissions.

Following successful trials with a prototype using a hybrid diesel-electric drivetrain, the

first vehicle will be delivered in Spring 2006.

"IC Corporation is committed to environmental leadership and delivering value to our customers," says a spokesman. "We believe that diesel-electric hybrid technology can be made commercially viable for the school bus industry and this collaboration is the first step in making that a reality."

The powertrain couples an International VT365 V8 diesel engine with an 80kW electric motor. The system is based on

parallel architecture, allowing the use of either diesel or electric. The system recovers kinetic energy during braking, charging the batteries while the bus is slowing down. This provides additional power for acceleration, making the hybrid buses ideal because of the frequent starting and stopping of the bus in service.

IC Corporation is a wholly-owned subsidiary of International Truck and Engine Corporation, owned by Navistar International Corporation.



LEZ proposals enter final consultation

The final 12-week consultation on London's Low Emission Zone (LEZ) has started, with proposed daily charges of between £100 and £200 for sub-Euro III coaches entering the 33 London boroughs.

Penalty charges for vehicles entering the LEZ without prepayment when the scheme begins in 2008 will be between £500 and £1,000 per offence. Transport for London suggests Euro II vehicles could meet the Euro II particulate targets by retrofitting a particulate trap.

Mayor Ken Livingstone said:

"I want people living, working in and visiting London to benefit from better air quality and live longer and healthier lives."

Taxis - some of the worst-polluting vehicles in London - have to meet Euro III for NOx and particulates (PM10) by mid-2008. Trucks over 7.5 tonnes have to comply by February 2008, and PSVs and vans over 3.5 tonnes by July 2008. In 2010, the Euro IV standard for PM10 will apply.

■ The consultation paper is available at www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/low-emission-zone

Briefly

■ SOLARIS is to supply Norwegian operator Norgessbuss AS, based in Oslo, with five Urbino 10 citybuses. Breaking new ground, the order means Norway has become the 16th export market for the Polish manufacturer. The buses are specially equipped to cope with the extremes of Scandinavian winters. The doors have been modified, a floor heating system installed and external lamps placed over passenger entrances. The buses for Norgessbuss AS will also be fitted with alcolock detectors which will, should alcohol be detected in the air breathed out by the driver, immobilize the vehicle.

■ Iveco-Irisbus is no longer associated with its Hungarian subsidiary Ikarusbus, having passed its shareholding to investment company MT Investor KFT. Ikarusbus was to make buses for the Hungarian and Russian markets but had been inactive for two years. Iveco retains control of the Hungarian bodybuilder, Ikarus Egyedi - translated as "Special Coach".

■ Volvo has announced its first Euro IV order in the UK. Lothian Buses in Edinburgh have ordered 10 Euro IV B7RLEs, as well as 75 Euro III B7TLs. The Euro IV vehicles - using SCR technology - with Wrights Eclipse Urban bodies, will be delivered in January 2007 and will be used on the city's guided busway. The Euro III vehicles have 11.3m Wrights Eclipse Gemini bodies and will be delivered in July.

■ A man died on Monday evening after careering through a central reservation and hitting a bus. The bus, carrying British Airways employees, was travelling down the A4 near West Drayton in West London. One of the four passengers was treated for minor injuries.

Traffic hits operator in pocket

A Gloucester County Council-funded replacement bus service has been hit by traffic congestion and roadworks in Cheltenham forcing the operator to put on extra buses at its own expense.

Marchant's Coaches took over the half-hourly Leckhampton - Cheltenham service from Stagecoach in December. A month into the contract, passengers were facing delays of up to an hour, which forced the firm to run a second bus at its own expense.

Boss Roger Marchant said the council had given them too tight a timetable and the buses were being further delayed by major roadworks on Bath Road.

Even without the roadworks, Mr Marchant claimed the buses would run around 15 minutes late.

"It's a busy road and there are lots of people who want to use the service for work. It's no good to them if we turn up a few minutes late."

"There is no alternative for us because we can't use Old Bath Road and miss a lot of our customers on Bath Road.

"I'm speaking to the County Council daily about this and they know there is a problem," he said.

A GCC spokesman said: "Stagecoach withdrew service F and the County Council stepped in to provide a replacement service. Marchant's Coaches subsequently won the tender. However roadworks in Bath Road are generating significant delays to buses.

"We are working with Marchant's to try to reduce the inconvenience to bus passengers and will review the operation of the service again when the roadworks have finished."



Marchant's has been hit by hold-ups



OPERATIONS at Yorkshire Traction Group subsidiaries have moved to new reporting lines since the takeover by Stagecoach just before Christmas (CBW, December 22). Following the £37m acquisition and the departure of chairman and managing director Frank Carter, Tony Cox, Stagecoach's Regional Director (South), has taken over as managing director of Stagecoach in Yorkshire, at Barnsley. Paul Hill managing director of Stagecoach in Lincolnshire, now reports directly to Les Warneford, the UK bus director, and Strathtay Scottish (which is surrounded by Stagecoach Scotland East) operates as Strathtay - part of the Stagecoach Group. Apart from the departure of Frank Carter and his son Michael, who was corporate affairs director, the other two directors, Norman Cooke and Mark Adamson, engineering and finance directors, continue in their posts.

Go-Ahead clears path for Arriva

Depot and operations to close in Bishop Auckland

GO-AHEAD North East has announced the closure of its depot and Bishop Auckland operations in April, marking the final withdrawal of former OK Motor Services operations, which were acquired in 1995.

Arriva North East, which operates from its own depot in Cockton Hill, Bishop Auckland, will be the main beneficiary of this closure, with around 25 vehicles worth of local service work being sold on. Details are not yet finalised, as discussions and negotiations with staff, and between companies, are ongoing.

GNE's managing director Paul Matthews told CBW that the condition of the depot, and the ongoing viability of services were the main reasons for closing down. "The depot would have required considerable expenditure on repairs, and ongoing redevelopment in the town may have forced us to give up the site eventually," he said. "We considered relocation, but services would have had to improve, as costs are rising."

In total GNE operates 50 vehicles with around 100 staff at the depot. Go-Ahead will be retaining around six vehicles' worth of work, including the prestigious 724 service to Newcastle, which will be upgraded later this spring. Arriva is being offered the remainder of commercial work, school



The Bishop Auckland depot will close in April

contracts have been surrendered, and Durham County Council service tenders will have to be renegotiated.

All driving staff and most engineering staff will be offered alternative employment, either with Arriva under full TUPE regulations, or at GNE's Chester-le-Street depot. Some of the administrative staff, and some engineering staff will be made redundant, with current estimates suggesting less than a dozen in total.

■ OK Motor Services was an 83-year-old family firm when it was purchased by Go-Ahead in 1995.

Dunn-Line settling in

Dunn-Line has completed its acquisition of Alpha Coach Company, as announced in October last year.

The assets of the company - based in Hull, Preston and Blackburn - included freehold land and buildings, 30 vehicles and 45 employees, and were sold for £2.065m, funded through new bank borrowings and cash.

Bob Dunn, Chief Executive of Dunn-Line, says, 'We are very pleased with the acquisition of Alpha, as there is a significant opportunity for organic growth within its market. Equally importantly, Alpha strengthens the Group and widens its geographic spread.'

■ Following last week's news that Dunn-Line has relocated its operating base, the company has applied to the North Western Traffic Area office for a new operator license to cover 42 vehicles. If successful, the licenses will help the company to develop its operations in the Derbyshire region, using its new operating sites in Heanor.

Rotala looks to the future

In a stock market statement on 27 January Rotala finally announced that Stewart Lawrenson has resigned his position as non-executive director (on 18 January), as per the company's agreement with Central Parking Corporation (see CBW 712). Two days later, Rotala's subsidiary Flights route 210 National Express contract came to an end, and transferred to TWM, a subsidiary of National Express.

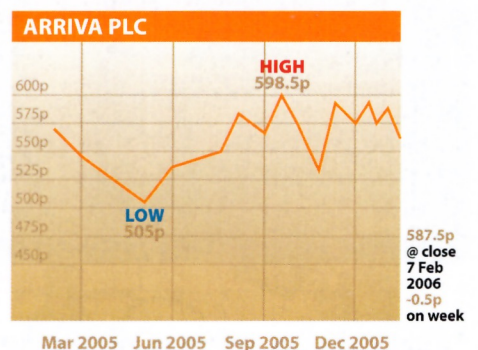
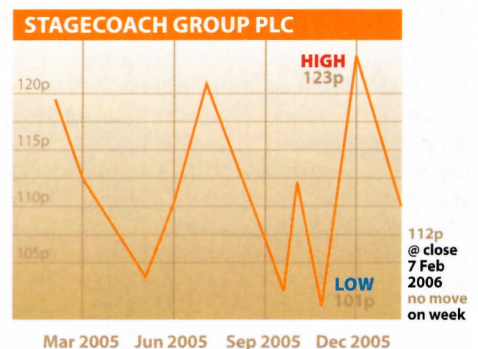
Rotala says, "It was in the interest of all parties, including users and employees, to ensure a smooth handover of the service. Hence we arranged for 19 employees to transfer to the employment of TWM."

First for investors

First Group has restated its promise to grow annual dividend payments by at least 10% year on year. This comes on the back of the Group's winning two railway franchises recently - the Greater Western and Thameslink, providing over £1bn of revenue each year for up to ten years. The dividend promise was first made in November 2004 and was expected to extend into the medium term. It is now made for the "foreseeable future".

■ Brokers Panmure Gordon has upgraded its First Group forecast from 390p to 450p (currently 404p), saying, "First Group is a defensive company with good growth opportunities in North America and UK rail." Morgan Stanley downgraded Stagecoach to "underperform", saying it is unlikely to retain its South West Trains franchise. The target price is now 109p, currently 113p.

The graphs in green relate to companies quoted on the Alternative Investments Market (AIM) while those in orange are quoted on the full London Stock Exchange. In both cases, the plots relate to share price fluctuations over the last year.



Fake pass scheme smashed

Irish cops rumble travel card scam

Gardai in Dublin have arrested a 33 year-old man as part of their investigations into forged free travel cards which were being sold over

the past several months.

The "Special Needs" Travel Cards, issued by the Department of Social & Family Affairs allow not

Dublin Bus inspectors raised the alarm

only the holder, but also a person accompanying them, to free travel at all times on the entire Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann and Irish Rail networks.

The Garda Bureau of Fraud Investigation (GBFI) said it had arrested and charged a 33-year-old Dublin man in connection with the fraud, after carrying out several interviews with suspects.

A Garda spokesman told *CBW* that while the source of the fake cards and the distribution network had now been dismantled, there were still fake cards in circulation. "Anyone who is caught in possession of these cards will be prosecuted and will face serious penalties. There are a lot of inspectors out there from Dublin Bus, Irish Rail and Bus Éireann and we will be continuing the investigation."

The forged cards were being sold on the street for

between €20 and €50 (£13-£35) and had been produced using high quality colour printers and photocopiers. Gardai began their investigation several weeks ago after suspicious passes were reported by a number of Dublin Bus inspectors.

The man is due to appear at Dublin District Court on February 10, and further arrests are likely. A review of the free-travel scheme is currently being conducted, with a view to the introduction of more secure and tamper-proof cards, possibly linked into future electronic ticketing systems.

Meanwhile staff at the operating end of the system say they have long had concerns about the validity of some of the passes being offered for travel, but have been reluctant to challenge the pass-holder because of a fear of being assaulted.



'Double standards' in new penalty points

Coach and bus drivers have hit out at what they describe as "double standards" in favour of motorists in the launch of the new extended penalty-point scheme in the republic of Ireland.

Amongst the 31 offences which will qualify for penalty points from April 1 is "driving an HGV or PSV in the outside lane of a motorway", which could lead to one penalty point on the licence of the driver (or three if the matter goes to court).

However, despite a range of new point offences including breaking a red light, or driving in a cycle lane, the offence of driving

a car in a bus lane has not been added to the scheme - and it's this that has got many operators and drivers' backs up.

Coach driver Nigel O'Connor told *CBW* "This is another example of the double-standard operating in favour of the private motorist.

"We're already being forced to stay behind slow-moving traffic on the inside lane of our two-lane motorway system, and now we see that there is simply no political will to act against motorists who are abusing bus lanes, and rendering our Quality Bus Corridors useless."

New link for Cork station

Bus and rail passengers in Cork are set to benefit from a new service introduced by Bus Éireann.

In a boost to integrated transport in the city, the No 5 service, which operates from Cork Institute of Technology to St. Patrick Street in the city centre, has been extended to serve Kent Station.

Buses will operate on a high frequency basis, every 15 minutes, with a total of 55 services operating on weekdays.

This service extension is part of Bus Éireann's commitment to the objectives

of the Cork Area Strategic Plan (CASP) and further integration of Public Transport in the Cork Area.



The number 5 will run every 15 minutes



Bus Éireann has announced a massive "seat sale" for the month of February, with all single tickets on all services within the republic capped at €10. The offer runs until February 28 and applies to all adult, student and child single fares on all services, with the exception of cross-border and Eurolines services. The promotion applies to tickets purchased in booking offices, on board and over the internet.

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Regional News

CBW takes a look at the big issues where you live in our new round-up of the regions. If you've got a local issue you would like us to cover, contact Andrew Peace at andrew.peace@rouncymedia.co.uk

NORTH

Merseytram, the project that cost £55m before the first sod was turned, now looks to be completely dead and buried following the High Court's rejection of Merseytravel's Judicial Review. Merseytravel officials say this sets transport plans in the city back by five years.

The PTE was looking to overturn the DfT's decision to shift cost guarantees onto local authorities, or recover the £55m it spent on feasibility and design studies.

Costs had spiralled from an initial £225m to a final pre-construction estimate of over £315m.

The PTE was so certain of getting the original go-ahead for the tram project that it pre-bought the rails.

The biggest victim - apart from the deprived areas of the city that will now miss out on much-needed regeneration - is likely to be Merseytravel's Local Transport Plan. Not just because the missing millions now make the funding uncertain, but because the whole edifice was built around the extensive Merseytram system. Bus operators touting cheap, high capacity and quick-to-assemble transport solutions are likely to receive a good hearing.

WALES

Rhondda Transport - aka Stagecoach in South Wales - is celebrating its centenary by repainting a bus in the company's original maroon and yellow livery, and by holding a special event for locals and enthusiasts. The bus also features interior vinyls of early RT buses.

John Gould, managing director of Stagecoach in South Wales says, "Our forefather, the Rhondda Tramways Co, was initially established in April 1906 to serve the growing mining community. One hundred years and many company names later, we nevertheless remain fully committed to serving the transport needs of residents, and hope they will join in our centenary celebrations."

The highlight of the celebrations will be a three-day rally at the Rhondda Heritage Park in Trehafod, 29 April - 1 May. This includes a minibuss rally - with 15 vintage vehicles - and a bus industry



Rhondda Transport's nod to the past as it celebrates its centenary

autojumble. Also there will be a former Rhondda buses 'decker, owned by the venue, which is currently being refurbished by Stagecoach.

Negligent carers are being blamed for the incident where a pensioner was left locked up in a minibus for nearly three hours. Nelly Burns, 79, was left in the cold and dark outside the **Vernon Hart Day Centre** in Maesteg, South Wales, after she was apparently forgotten.

Mrs Burns, who cannot walk and has difficulty talking, was taken to hospital suffering from mild hypothermia after being discovered by social workers when her husband raised the alarm.

The carers were suspended and then dismissed following a report. A spokesman says, "The report concluded that the reason the person was left on the bus was human error, by the two members of staff. It also concluded that although there was an absence of certain written procedures, these were not considered to be a factor in this case."

Mrs Burns' husband took exception to the use of the term "human error", saying, "To not check the van in the night when they were locking it up is beyond my imagination at what a human person could do."

LONDON

A **Metrobus** driver foiled an armed robbery last Friday after leaping from his cab and tackling one of the thieves. Father of four Nick Barden, 35, spotted the man struggling with a security guard outside an HSBC bank as he passed by on his 434 service in Coulsden, Surrey. "It all happened so quickly," he says. "As soon as I stopped the bus in the middle of the road both the



Portsmouth is preparing for a busy summer season

Briefly

Coventry is the latest city to be considering a full 24-hour bus service. Centro, the local PTE, is to consult users on the viability of the service. A spokesman says night transport is becoming increasingly important in today's 24 hour society. Arriva The Northwest and Wales' night bus service went live in Liverpool at the end of last month.

robbers turned and looked at me and panicked." The men ran empty-handed down an alleyway where their getaway car was parked.

SOUTH EAST

Portsmouth has allocated extra coach parking spaces in anticipation of a bumper tourist season this year.

The city will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Portsmouth-born Isambard Kingdom Brunel in April; it is planning an exhibition for another of its famous sons, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in the summer; it is the only UK stopover for the Volvo Ocean Race over Whitsun; and the Spinnaker Tower - the UK's tallest publicly-accessible building - will be open for its first full tourist season this year.

New parking bays have been designated in St George's Road in



A renegade pressure group is rallying against First Group in Bristol

Briefly

GMPTA's concessionary travel scheme will allow the over 60s and disabled free travel on buses, trams and trains between 0930hrs-0000hrs, Monday to Friday and all day weekends and holidays – the trams and trains are over and above the PTA's statutory obligation. The scheme is estimated to cost £22m, and has been partly funded through GMPTA's annual council tax levy.

Aberdeenshire operators and users are set to benefit from a £100k grant from the Scottish Executive. Three hundred new bus stops – with improved information and an SMS 'next-bus' service – will be installed across the region.

the city centre, and more will be available from 1 May – 30 September on the north side of Museum Road. Set-down and pick-up places are available at The Hard Interchange. These spaces are in addition to existing coach parking at the D-Day Museum in Clarence Esplanade, Southsea. See www.visitportsmouth.co.uk for more details.

Brighton and Hove Bus Company drivers are threatening industrial action over a pay deal.

Drivers are currently paid £8.41 per hour (compared with £7.53 at fellow Go-Ahead company Go North East and £6.60 at TWM), with £1 extra for weekend working and double time on Bank Holidays. They want £9 an hour, and to retain the weekend rate.

Roger French, Brighton and Hove managing director has reportedly offered a £16/ week across-the-board raise. Only 26 out of 525 T&G workers voted to accept his plan.

The drivers are apparently unwilling to risk public support with an all-out strike, but are considering working-to-rule. This would include waiting until every passenger was seated before pulling off, stopping at every bus stop even if nobody is waiting, and not pulling away from stops until the bus ahead has left – tactics estimated to double waiting times and plunge the system into chaos. Brighton and Hove buses carry around 100,000 passengers a day.

French says talks are continuing and he expects to have further meetings with the union over the next few weeks.

SOUTH WEST

Reclaim Bristol's Buses – a pressure group being set up by users frustrated with **First Group** services in the congestion torn city – is holding its first public meeting this week. Organisers cite the three fare increases in 2005, as well as incidents like the commuter who found it quicker to walk the five miles to work rather than catch a bus, and school children being dropped off on dangerous stretches of road. A statement from the group says, "In recent years, under the monopoly of First Bus, Bristol's bus service has gone down the toilet, fares have spiralled out of control and congestion has increased as a result."

"People are not happy, and unfortunately it is usually the drivers who are on the receiving end of their rage, despite many of them sharing their disgust at First's excessive profits. It only takes one look at their annual report to see that the price hikes are not for paying drivers but are funding 11% rises in directors' salaries and similar rises in shareholder dividends." (see page 8)

First in Bristol says the company would like to meet the organisers to "address the specific issues that are raised and look at the best way of working with them in taking some of the ideas forward."

The redeveloped **Bristol Bus Station** is due to open on 8 February. The station now has 19 bays, an enclosed passenger concourse, a new café, newsagents, and First Group administration offices and driver facilities.

Briefly

After a successful three-year trial, Translink, which runs buses in Northern Ireland, has ordered Bridgewatch units for its over 100 new double-decker buses and coaches. James Erwin, engineering manager at Translink, said: "Bridgeclear gives our drivers clear warnings well before a potential bridge bash. We are also looking to have the system include other hazards, such as narrow roads and soft verges." See Products, page 42, for more.

A bus driver from Cardiff has been found guilty of raping a passenger. Nicholas Vann, 37, persuaded the woman to accompany him on a weekend away and then subjected her to a sexual assault. The court heard he forced her to read a passage from the Bible before the attack. The father of four denied rape and causing actual bodily harm and will be sentenced later this month.

Passengers on a crowded First National bus were left terrified after a gang of six youths shattered a bus window by throwing a heavy metal hammer from the pavement. The hammer narrowly missed a 69-year-old man, who was left in shock as glass scattered across the double-decker. A First National spokesman said: "We've never had anything like this previously. It was a pretty serious attack."

Edinburgh Council is to upgrade selected stops to "bus-to-bus" interchanges and colour-code information boards at bus stops to help make identifying different routes easier. Research says many journeys involve more than one bus. The nine interchanges will also have differently painted roof caps mimicking Edinburgh's skyline. The new stops will be introduced in April.

Kickstart controversy

Operator fuming at Arriva's Government cash award

Andrew Peace, News Editor

An angry bus operator in the North East says Arriva has been given government money to compete with his commercially-run service.

The government's refusal to reconsider its award has led to Northumbria Coaches deregistering its service, and putting the vehicles up for sale. Ten staff possibly face redundancy.

After discussions with the Public Transport Team at Northumberland County Council last July, Northumbria Coaches registered its wholly commercial 618 Amble-Widdrington-Newcastle service, unaware that in June the council and Arriva had made an application for a Kickstart grant to enhance its 518 service on part of this route.

After an investment of £150,000 in four vehicles, Northumbria started the service in October. A month later, partner in the firm Adrian Smith read in the local newspaper that Arriva had won a £294,000 Kickstart grant to fund its new Plus 518 service which included Widdrington Station.

Arriva's 518 service had been running for 20 years at hourly frequency; the Plus 518 was registered to run hourly in between the 518, 5 and 10 minutes in front of the Northumbria service.

The Kickstart bus competition had £20m to "pump-prime or develop new or enhanced bus services". In all, 117 bids were received by the DfT totalling £56m. The results were announced on 1 November 2005.

On hearing about Arriva's award, Mr Smith immediately contacted the Department for Transport to complain that it was funding a large operator to run against him, and that he had been unaware of the Kick Start grant.

The reply, dated 13 December, says, "We understand that your service 618 was not actually running at the time the council submitted their bid, but can confirm that an email was sent to

us notifying of a subsequent commercial bus registration made by yourselves for the new service covering part of the Plus 518 route."

The DfT turned down his appeal, saying it thought Arriva's bid was "of high quality with strong commercial potential", and that factors like a new turning circle at Widdrington, avoidance of delay at rail crossings, lowfloor buses, common ticketing and, finally, the fact that one operator, Arriva, would run both 518 services were the features that finally persuaded it.

In a final letter dated 6 January, David Farmer of the Buses and Taxis division of the DfT, says, "I note that you remain unconvinced over some of the details and I am sorry that this is causing you continued concern.

"It seems, however, that your primary concern is regarding the ability of your service 618 to realistically 'compete' with the two 518 services provided by Arriva, one of which will receive this grant."

He says he believes the Kickstart competition was administered fairly, continuing "We can see no reason not to allow the grant to NCC for the Plus 518 service to proceed... despite your concern we would hope that you could still continue to run your 618 service alongside the two operated by Arriva."

Mr Smith says he has no right of appeal, or the funds necessary to fight the case further.

A spokesperson for Arriva said: "After the bid was submitted, Northumbria Coaches registered commercial services on the 518 route. These services did not meet the improvements envisaged by the Kickstart bid - in particular the use of lowfloor easy-access buses."

"We understand that Northumbria Coaches then made representations to the DfT about the funding. The DfT then confirmed that the Northumberland County Council/Arriva project was to go ahead."



TfL launched a fleet of six Wrightbus Electrocity buses on Tuesday, the first hybrid vehicles in London. They started operating on route 360, run by London Central, yesterday (8 February). The driveline comprises a 336 volt battery pack powering the wheels via a 120Kw electric motor, charged by a 1.9 litre diesel Euro IV engine. In comparison with regular route 360 buses (Euro III with particulate filters), tests show the hybrids achieved: 89% reduction in nitrous oxides, 83% reduction in carbon monoxide, 40% reduction in fuel use, 38% reduction in carbon dioxide and 30% reduction in perceived sound levels (noise reduced from 78dB to 74dB) This is the first of a number of hybrid systems to be evaluated by London Buses. The six hybrids will be monitored and assessed over the coming months for performance, reliability and durability.

BCH Group investigating 'mini ATOL licence'?

The Bonded Coach Holiday scheme is poised to launch a new air package scheme for coach operators.

An insider told *CBW* that the Bonded Coach Holidays Group - one of only seven bonding schemes in the travel industry - has been working on a 'mini ATOL licence' which will allow coach operators to get legal cover for a limited number of packaged air

travel holidays.

The rumour comes as many operators challenged by low-cost airlines have begun searching for a way to satisfy the air tour market, marketing a door-to-door service to bring added value. At present, package tour cover can be obtained through tour wholesalers and through the Consortium of Independent Tour Operators (CITO) without going through the

costly procedure of obtaining an ATOL licence.

■ BCH last week launched a press campaign to counter suggestions in national newspapers that bonding - the most popular scheme underwritten by ABTA - could now be less effective.

An article in last week's *Times* highlighted changes to the ABTA scheme which no longer covers deposits lost to non-bonded

agents, and will provide cover limited by the contribution made.

ABTA told *CBW* that the number of incidents of agents taking deposits but not passing them on to the ABTA-bonded tour firms had been small, but that claims had been 'significant.'

BCH pointed out that its scheme is an alternative and that monies paid direct to any BCH member are covered.

Free bus launched with cash warning

Andrew Jarosz, CBW correspondent

A new free bus service in Leeds city centre will only survive if the local council and businesses are prepared to enter into a funding partnership – that's the stark warning from the Passenger Transport Authority. The service aims to tempt car users onto public transport, relieve congestion, make regular services more reliable and hence boost general patronage.

Introduced this week, on a six month trial, the MetroConnect 'FreeCityBus' service is already well on course to achieve its one million passengers per year target. The first services were packed with passengers.

Funded by Metro, the service runs every four minutes from the rail station and calls at key sites in the city centre. Operated by First, the experimental service is costing £200k in support, but the PTE is already saying that if the trial doesn't come off, the five buses costing an additional £500k, will be deployed on other services. The 29-seat buses are brightly and clearly marked FreeCityBus, with a logo on the roof so people can identify them from their office windows.

Whilst Metro Chairman Cllr Karam Hussain, Leeds City Council leader Cllr Andrew Carter, and Vice President of Leeds Chamber of Commerce Alan Gill, all welcomed the service, none of the other potential partners have actually contributed yet – and members of the Passenger Transport Authority have warned that they expect them to as part of a partnership agreement for the future.

"Metro has responded to Leeds Initiative and major city centre employers to develop the new FreeCityBus service," said Councillor Hussain.

"The route connects key business, leisure, learning and health locations around Leeds city centre and will be an ideal way of getting around the city for the many thousands of people who arrive in Leeds by train, bus or coach."

"Once they can get around the city, quickly, conveniently and for free, fewer people will bring their cars into the city centre, which will reduce congestion and in turn, mean that regular bus services become more reliable."

PTA member Cllr Peter McBride warned however, that the service would not continue, however successful, if the local council did not contribute. "This plan was thrown out last year by the Tories and Liberals, because it favoured Leeds, so we agreed that every town and city could have the same deal, providing there was a partnership approach to funding.

"Here we are, with everyone claiming credit, but only Metro has coughed up some money."

If the initial six-month trial is successful, it can be extended for a further six months. After that a decision will be taken on whether it becomes permanent and whether similar concepts could subsequently be introduced in other towns and cities in West Yorkshire.



The free bus service is already in danger

Coventry plans parking solution

Coventry City Council says it expects to solve its coach parking problems by the end of the month. Plans include re-opening a car park to coaches and strict enforcement of car parking regulations.

Last week CBW reported a campaign in Coventry over the lack of parking facilities, started after coach operators were given notice to quit the re-developed Pool Meadow bus station. Local people got behind the campaign, collecting a 500-signature petition calling on the city council to re-open a coach park closed three years ago.

Duncan Elliott, head of

regeneration at the council told CBW the council has now accepted the case for re-opening White Street.

He said: "I'm talking with operators every day who are complaining about the lack of parking, and re-opening White Street is definitely the solution they want. We are looking into the possibility, I've got meetings with lawyers over the next few days to check if there are any problems. We are trying to get six to eight spaces for laying-over. If all goes well it should be up and running over the next 2-3 weeks."

But he emphasises that it is

not a long term solution.

He added: "White Street was closed a few years ago because it is remote from the city centre and because it became a target for vandal attacks.

"The situation is still the same. It is fine during the day but you would not want to drop passengers off there, or leave coaches overnight. It is only suitable as a lay-over area."

There are no toilet facilities or anywhere to buy a drink or food, although it is just a five minute walk to Pool Meadow.

Elliott says the council has not decided how much it will charge for parking.

World



EGYPT has suffered two more serious coach crashes – killing 32 and injuring 54 – just two weeks after six Australian tourists were killed and 14 injured in another incident. Of the two most recent accidents, 14 tourists from Hong Kong were killed and 30 injured when their coach overturned on a motorway near the Red Sea. Eighteen Egyptians were later killed, and 24 injured, in a collision with a lorry in Qina, north of Luxor. The accidents are being blamed on poorly-maintained roads and drivers ignoring road safety regulations – the second accident was reportedly caused by the coach speeding around a corner.

Hundreds of Iranian bus drivers have been imprisoned for threatening strike action over pay and conditions in the capital Tehran. The United Bus Company of Tehran workers are being held in the notorious Evin Prison, and only released after signing guarantees that they would not strike, but the majority are still being held. Workers and their families have reportedly been subject to beatings and intimidation – Amnesty International is calling for their immediate release.

New York is in the process of incrementally 'nationalising' its bus services, under the control of the state-funded Metropolitan Transport Agency (MTA). The latest to be absorbed is the Jamaica Bus Line, a south Queens operator with 103 vehicles. The Triboro Coach company, the last of seven companies to come under MTA control, will be transferred by the end of February. New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg said: "We believe this transfer improves services for the riding public and provides better value for the taxpayers."

Conference to address key coach holiday issues

Essential matters to be tackled at travel and tourism event

Leading figures from the European and UK travel and coach industries will be the keynote speakers at the first Coach Holiday Conference, being hosted jointly by the Coach Tourism Council (CTC) and Bonded Coach Holidays (BCH).

The event, which is being held at coach-friendly Llandudno in North Wales over the weekend of Friday to Sunday, April 7 to 9, will be opened by Alan Pugh AM, Welsh Minister for Culture, followed by short welcomes from CTC chairman Sean Taggart and BCH chairman Chris Roberts.

Issues and topics that affect everyone involved in coach travel and tourism, ranging from European legislation and consumer rights to handling holiday claims and the changing face of travel and tourism, will be covered by a panel of speakers. They include Tom Jenkins, executive director of the European Tour Operators Association (ETOA), Matthew Chapman QC, an expert in travel law and holiday claims, and tourism expert Mike Barnard. Industry veteran Ron Whittle will act as chairman and moderator.

CTC chairman Sean Taggart said: "This is going to be a hugely important and very exciting event for anyone involved in the coach industry. The conference will provide a unique platform for everyone to get together, look to the future and discuss how we go forward."



Key event: Sean Taggart

BCH chairman Chris Roberts added: "Llandudno is an excellent location and we are grateful to Tourism Partnership North Wales, Wales Tourist Board, Conwy County Borough Council and Phil Coates of Wales Official

Tourist Guides Association for their support in facilitating the event.

"Everyone associated with tourism in the region recognises the importance of coaching and we are delighted to be holding our first joint conference at this ever popular tourist destination."

Following the conference, a gala dinner hosted by Tourism Partnership North Wales will be held at the conference venue, the Victorian Best Western Imperial Hotel. On Saturday, April 8, CTC members will be able to air their views at the annual general meeting and suppliers' workshop that will be held in the North Wales Conference Centre.

There will then be opportunities to join one of three special familiarisation trips covering the Conwy Valley, the Isle of Anglesey and North Wales mountain passes and market towns. On Sunday there will be an additional familiarisation trip circling Snowdon, based on the myths of Merlin.

A gala reception and dinner will be held on the Saturday evening while on the Sunday, golfers can get in the swing in preparation for the Wales - Golf As It Should Be coach holiday industry golf championship that is being held on Monday April 10.

■ For more details and a delegate application form, contact Karen Hudson on karenh@cpt-uk.org

Scope for Bard and breakfast breaks

Almost 400 exhibitors will be attending British Travel Trade Fair 2006 at the Birmingham NEC next month, making it the biggest show of its kind. This year's show is focusing on three themes - Menu for Success, Kids UK and The Future for Britain's Past.

The themes encompass the three key tourism areas of food and drink, family holidays and heritage. And as the event showcases the best of British, it is only fitting

that Shakespeare will be very much in evidence.

The Royal Shakespeare Company (Stand HE 445) will be raising the curtain on the biggest festival in its history. From April, the RSC will be staging a year-long presentation of the Bard's complete works.

Some of the top names in the theatre, including Dame Judi Dench and Janet Suzman, will be taking part in the groundbreaking event, which involves the

construction of three new theatre venues.

"The RSC is to be congratulated on this extraordinary initiative," says Tom Wright, chief executive of VisitBritain. "It is the first time that all 37 plays, as well as Shakespeare's sonnets and longer poems, have been staged in a single festival. It is certain to be a major draw for visitors from abroad, as well as providing Britain's domestic tourism industry with a once-in-a-



1-2 March 2006
NEC, Birmingham

lifetime boost."

"It is particularly appropriate that the RSC has chosen to promote The Complete Works at BTTF 2006," says Wright. "Britain's heritage is one of the major themes at

this year's exhibition, and Shakespeare - and the RSC - are prime examples of the rich diversity that this country offers visitors."

■ CBW is pleased to continue to be an official support publication for BTTF. The show is organised by Reed Travel Exhibitions on behalf of VisitBritain, the UK's lead tourism marketing organisation. The fair is on March 1 and 2. For more information go to www.britishtraveltradefair.com



Join ICT for fore play in Jersey

P&O Ferries and Wilsure Insurance have joined the list of sponsors at the ICT Golf Challenge being held in Jersey from May 7-10. Wilsure Insurance is sponsoring the hole-in-one competition and the winner will collect the keys of a car worth up to £10,000.

It's tee time in Jersey

Participants will win an array of prizes with the overall champion winning a week's accommodation at the Pestana Golf Resort on the Algarve in Portugal.

Steve Moore, director of ICT, said: "This year's event promises to be a great event both for golfers and partners. Working with Jersey Tourism we will offer a great few days on and off the course for like-minded people in the industry. It is a must for operators calendars and all standards of golfers are welcome."

■ Call 0207 538 4627.



Cubbing together: new attractions should make visitors to Longleat Safari Park swell with pride

Landmark year for UK's first safari park

Longleat Safari Park, the star of BBC's popular Animal Park series, celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. It was the first place outside Africa to open a drive-through safari park in 1966 and today it is as popular as ever with groups.

Longleat is also home to more than a dozen other attractions including the Hedge Maze, Pets Corner, Longleat Railway, Safari Boats, Old Joe's Mine and Postman Pat Village.

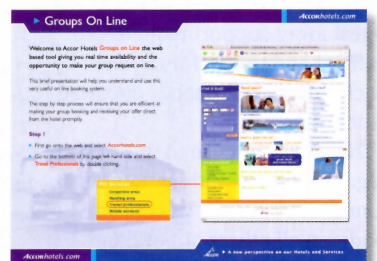
This year the park will be unveiling its new 'Vulture Veldt' - a large aviary housing five pairs of African vultures - and the summer will see the return of the popular live shows. Other attractions for 2006 include a children's water splash zone in the Adventure Castle and two new safari boats offering sea lion-escorted trips through hippo-infested waters to Gorilla Island.

The Wiltshire attraction opens for the season on Saturday 11 February, when all activities will be open daily until Sunday February 19. There will weekend only opening from Saturday 25 to Sunday March 6 and then daily openings from Saturday April 1 to Sunday September 5.

Longleat House is open daily through the year, except Christmas Day.

There is free on-site coach parking and discounts for groups that represent considerable savings. A passport ticket enables groups of 12 or more to see all 11 attractions. Rates are £13.30 for adults and £10.50 for senior citizens and children from three to 16. The total cost of individual tickets to all attractions would be £26 for an adult.

■ Call 01985 844400, email: enquiries@longleat.co.uk or go to www.longleat.co.uk



Accor to launch online bookings

A new web service that will enable coach operators to book their groups into hotels direct is being launched at BTTF by Accor Hotels. The new service - Groups on Line - will enable operators to check availability at a huge range of hotels across the UK and Europe.

Operators will be able to ascertain live availability, access the types of rooms and rates available and then make a booking.

Michael Stevens, the company's director of global leisure sales, said: "Accor continues to work closely with our trade partners driving business forward, but, as a major player within the industry, we also have to look at how we utilise our distribution channels and resources.

"In 2001 we created an offline booking tool - GR2000 - and the follow-up to this is Groups on Line, which will be launched at BTTF.

"Accor needs to keep at the front of technology and to offer the best service and support to our customers."

The new service will be accessed at www.accorhotels.com by double-clicking on Travel Professionals on the bottom of the left-hand page.

Send your letters to cbwinbox@rouncymedia.co.uk, fax 01733 293241 or write to Inbox, CBW, 3 The Office Village, Cygnet Park, Hampton, Peterborough PE7 8FD

Burton row rumbles on

With reference to the letter in CBW, January 26, ('You let our profits go for a Burton') regarding the transport of Burton Albion supporters to Old Trafford, I am disappointed on two counts. One that a magazine such as CBW did not cover what was surely an event of which the coaching industry in this area should be proud, and secondly that the letter printed was done so anonymously.

I am led to believe that it was the largest away support to go to Old Trafford and most of them went by coach - over 100 coaches departed for Manchester.

The only reference to this in your magazine was a scathing letter from a unnamed operator who seemed to condemn all others out of hand.

The unnamed writer claims that one of his coaches earned twice as much as any other running that night. I drove my coach to Old Trafford under the direction of Swiftsure Travel for £400. If he got £800 for the same trip, does that not strike you as profiteering?

The next time one of those passengers who travelled on one of his vehicles thinks of hiring a coach, will he or she think they were overcharged and find another way to travel?

You make friends in this trade and that is surely the way for the industry to survive and grow. The attitude of the author can only bring about the collapse of that mutual support. It will be a sad day if this feeling spreads throughout what is a brilliant profession.

Donald Handley

DH Cars of Denstone, Uttoxeter

CBW editor Mark Williams says...

Yet another letter responding to our original writer, suggesting he made a shrewd judgement when he decided to remain anonymous!

LETTER OF THE WEEK

I have read with great interest your articles referring to the ongoing problems between Kent County Council and School Transport Providers.

One aspect of the article that really amazes me is the fact that the CPT have become involved. In 1999 operators working for Carmarthenshire County Council faced similar problems. As CPT members we approached our Regional Director who made a formal report to CPT Headquarters for assistance.

The application was refused on the basis that it was felt by CPT London that our predicament was of a local nature and therefore should be dealt with locally, in other words they didn't want to know.

As a result myself and several other local operators refused to renew our membership of the CPT.

I would be intrigued to know why a local issue in Kent has CPT support when Carmarthenshire did not.

Rhodri Evans (Former CPT Member)

Ffoshelig Coaches
Carmarthen

The general point was well-made, in that it is true that coach operators do, on occasion, miss the opportunity to maximise profit when demand is highest.

This is not 'profiteering' but simple demand-based economics - the same thing as charging twice as much for a holiday cottage rental during the school holidays. In this example, the heating bill falls, the mortgage and rates remain the same, and the rental simply reflects the supply situation.

There are, of course, entire companies run on the premium they charge customers for sub-contracting coach operators; yes, they may have better marketing and thus get the inquiries first, but more often than not their expertise is

Hot topics

Should there be a 'bad debtors' register for operators to check before providing hire vehicles?

Would you agree to let your schools drivers be trained by the local authority?

in predicting under-supply situations and putting themselves in the right place to get the business.

Clearly your company and others felt they got a fair rate for hire, though I have to mention that a day's hire, for a shopping trip, from a small operator not far from here was quoted to me at £575; the operator wouldn't budge on price. And that was in January last year!

Readers are always encouraged to allow us to use their name and company, but for very good reason some prefer us to withhold this information. We will always honour this request if there's a good case for it.

Coming soon from the CPT...

I was interested to read the letter from Jane George regarding Civil Penalties and 'clandestines'. Her advice that operators should introduce a driver's checklist to help mitigate the effects of this legislation is sound and helpful. However, I would like to add a postscript, which is that CPT are currently in a useful and open dialogue with the Home Office with a view to producing a model checklist which can be used. This checklist will properly reflect the practical issues facing both the enforcement agencies and drivers and operators. We expect this to be available soon.

Allan Edmondson

Head of Coach Services
CPT UK Ltd

Archer's not the only one!

I have just read the highly entertaining article from Archer (Keep off the grass, CBW, January 19).

Sounds just like a normal day to us!

Anna Bryant, Coaching Manager

Brighton & Hove Coaches

We've had so many e-mails, phone calls and text messages congratulating us on the new look CBW that we couldn't possibly print them all. So, instead here's a selection of what people had to say about last week's issue. Thanks for all your comments, keep 'em coming... **"Congratulations on the new look, even my wife stopped to read it"...** "I genuinely had to do a double-take. Well done, it really stands out from the rest"... **"Glad to see the flash design was backed up with some really interesting stories, well done to all concerned"...** "I've been a subscriber since the start and it's great to see CBW evolving into a really top-class magazine. Keep it up!"





Peter Woodhouse is a partner in the Bond Pearce Transport team and deals regularly with road and passenger transport issues. He is a specialist advocate with full rights to appear in all courts and tribunals in the UK. Peter has a particular interest in employment matters in the transport sector. He can be contacted on 0117 929 9197 or by email pwoodhouse@bondpearce.com

Links

www.efa.org.uk (for an example of an age-neutral application form)
www.bondpearce.com/publications/bppubs072005_09.pdf (for a more detailed account of the proposed Age Discrimination Regulations)

Employers now have to be more family-friendly

Employment Law Review: Are you ready?

Focus on employees brings new rules for operators to follow

Peter Woodhouse

Age discrimination, family-friendly reforms, sexual harassment law and redundancy consultation - these are just some of the hard-hitting issues that have been dominating the fast-moving world of employment law recently and will be relevant to any operator who employs staff.

These are the key developments you need to be aware of in order to keep pace with the latest batch of changes that have been introduced.

Disability discrimination

Since 5 December 2005, the definition of 'disability' has been extended by virtue of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Persons with progressive conditions such as MS, HIV and cancer are now classed as having a disability, while those seeking to show a mental impairment no longer have to demonstrate that it is a clinically well-recognised illness. Employers will therefore need to be extra careful when considering the need to make any reasonable adjustments for people who are considered to be disabled.

Grievance letters

When an employee has a grievance, they must raise it with their employer. But it may not need to be such a formal process anymore. Towards the end of last year the Employment Appeal Tribunal indicated a flexible approach to the question of what constitutes a grievance letter. In two landmark cases, it was decided that a letter from the employee's solicitor can instigate a grievance procedure and it does not matter if this letter includes other matters or fails to expressly mention the word 'grievance'. Email correspondence can now also constitute a written grievance.

Age discrimination

Age discrimination is the final piece in the jigsaw of the EU



Employment Equality Directive and is probably the one area which will herald the most fundamental changes in the UK. The new Regulations are due to come into force in October 2006 and will outlaw direct and indirect discrimination, as well as harassment and victimisation, on the grounds of age. For employers, the new law will have far-reaching implications on almost all aspects of employment, from recruitment to dismissal, pay and benefits to training, redundancy and retirement. Importantly, the right not to be discriminated against applies to all employees whatever their age.

Work and families

Also anticipated for October is legislation to improve the rights of employees for maternity leave, paternity leave, flexible working and paid bank holidays. The Work and Families Bill is currently before Parliament and, when implemented, will provide for Regulations to:

- Introduce a right to additional paternity leave where the mother returns to work early (enabling fathers to benefit from leave and statutory pay);
- Make the right to a flexible working request available to Carers of both children and adults;
- Improve the business administration of maternity, paternity and adoption pay.

Personality dismissals?

A case that made the news last November was *Perkin v St George's Healthcare NHS Trust*. The Court of Appeal extended the scope of the 'some other substantial reason' heading for a potentially fair dismissal by declaring that a personality clash, while not in itself a ground for dismissal, can become a fair reason if an employee's abrasive character 'manifests itself in the workplace'. Nevertheless, employers should keep in mind that the carrying out of a reasonable procedure is still paramount to a fair dismissal.

School bus boss vows to fight banning order

Operator says he'll sell fleet to fund legal battle



Traffic Commissioner Philip Brown

A SCHOOL BUS company has been ordered off the road after almost half of its fleet failed road safety tests.

Vehicle inspectors found that at one depot run by Black and White Motors Ltd a double decker had wheel nuts so loose that they could be unscrewed by hand.

And at another one of the company's depots, inspectors discovered two buses with badly worn brakes.

The company, which operates eight buses, holds contracts with six schools in Hampshire to ferry children to and from school.

Traffic commissioner for the western area, Philip Brown, banned the company for operating for 28 days at a public inquiry in Southampton, Hants.

He took the action after Black and White Motors Ltd had been hauled before him twice before, at public inquiries, for poorly maintaining its buses.

Managing director of Black and White Motors Ltd Peter Bailey said this would force his company out of business because the schools would cancel their contracts.

And he vowed to sell his fleet of buses to fund a legal challenge against the order.

He said the decision would leave the pupils his company ferried to and from school "in the lurch".

Black and White Motors Ltd, of Portsmouth, Hants, was found in breach of the terms of its private vehicle operator's licence.

What the vehicle examiner said:

Vehicle examiner Michael Laily told the inquiry that he had carried out a spot check at the company's Andover depot on July 26 last year.

He found that one double decker, which was in for repairs, had seven loose wheel nuts out of ten - some he could screw off with his fingers.

Mr Laily said it was clear the nuts had been loose for some time because rust had begun to grow behind them.

He immediately gave the vehicle a

prohibition order - banning it instantly from public roads.

Another inspection was carried out by vehicle examiner Martin Netley on buses at the company's Winchester depot.

He found that two were unsafe as their brakes were badly worn.

Mr Netley gave one a prohibition order and another a delayed prohibition order, which stated the problem had to be fixed in ten days.

Five of the company's other buses were found to be in good working order.

Mr Netley told the inquiry that the company's depots had been spot checked because of the firm's poor maintenance record.

He said: "It was worrying as the type of defects being found were loose nuts and worn brakes. I am worried that this operator can't maintain his vehicles in a satisfactory state.

Although I've been to three public inquiries I don't feel I've been given enough time

Peter Bailey



Two buses inspected had badly worn brakes

"The operator has not complied with his licence."

He criticised the company for failing to keep proper records of faults and repairs that it claimed had been carried out.

He said: "Since the two previous public inquiries there doesn't seem to have been any improvement whatsoever."

What the operator said:

Peter Bailey, managing director of Black and White Motors Ltd, told the inquiry that the double decker with the loose nuts had been in a workshop for repair.

He said that the nuts may have been loosened while work was being carried out on it by company mechanics.

But Mr Netley said rust behind the nuts conclusively proved that they had been loose for a long period of time.

Mr Bailey said that the problems had now been rectified and he would make sure proper maintenance records were kept in the future.

When Mr Brown asked him "would you accept that you broke your undertaking to keep your vehicles in a serviceable condition?" after pausing he replied "yes".

After the inquiry he said that the decision to suspend his licence for 28 days would force him out of business.

He said: "I have been operating for 18 years and in that time my company hasn't had an accident or so much as a parking ticket.

"I employ eight people who I will have to let go now, it's very sad.

"I know my buses weren't up to scratch but I had paid a third company to do the repairs and they clearly didn't do them properly.

"Although I've been to three public inquiries I don't feel I've been given enough time.

"I just feel sorry for the schools who are now going to have to find someone else to pick their pupils up. This has really left them in the lurch."

The schools he has contracts with are Henry Beaufort School, Winchester, Wherwell Primary School, Andover, Bishop Challoner Catholic Secondary

Since the two previous public inquiries there doesn't seem to have been any improvement whatsoever

Martin Netley, VOSA

School, Basingstoke, Clatford Primary School, Andover and The Westgate School, Winchester and Norman Gate School, Andover.

What the traffic commissioner said:

Mr Brown, who took 40 minutes to reach his decision, said that he would suspend the company's licence for 28 consecutive days.

He said: "The operator has committed to improve but he has failed to achieve a consistent standard of maintenance.

"The operator is still falling short as far as maintenance is concerned. I have to ask myself 'has this operator reached the end of the road?'

"I do have promises from him that he will improve but I believe a proportionate response is for me to determine this case by suspending the operators licence for a period of 28 consecutive days.

"I do realise this may put the operator in difficulty with school contracts but sadly I have been put into a corner," said the traffic commissioner.

"Hopefully Mr Bailey will be able to learn from all of this so in the next school year his vehicles will be as they should be."

Mr Brown said the company could choose when the 28-day suspension began but it had to be completed by July 31 this year.



A mechanic carrying out correct wheelnut torquing on a First bus. The public inquiry heard that the nuts on one of Black and White's buses were so loose they could be undone by hand

"wɒl tɪoʊzənɪT"

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'Sword of Damocles' hangs over firm

Perrett lays down the law to 'shambolic' operator in reconvened inquiry

A coach operator apparently unaware of how "shambolically" her business was being run has had her licence curtailed and must comply with several conditions following the conclusion of a public inquiry last week.

Margaret Martindale, who has run County Durham-based Martindale's Taxis and Minicoaches since her husband died in 1978, has had the number of vehicles she is authorised to operate cut to two vehicles.

Mrs Martindale admitted at the resumption of the hearing in Leeds to having little idea of just how badly her son, Mark Martindale, had been managing the business his father founded 32 years ago.

She told the North Eastern area public inquiry: "I have not had much to do with the business since I left the running of it to my son in April.

"He has not been interested in doing paperwork and never has been, but I suppose he will have to get used to it now.

"I did not know how far things had gone until last week, which I know is a bit late in that day. I am very sorry about that."

Her comments followed a damning assessment of the company's paperwork delivered during the hearing by VOSA vehicle examiner Gordon Whittaker and traffic examiner Ray Jones.

The inquiry had been adjourned on January 25 as the operator had not brought any documentation to the hearing to prove that the improvements requested by Mr Whittaker and Mr Jones had been made.

But the pair found that forms still did not show whether repair work had been actually carried out and tachograph charts were not stored in chronological order - two of the main criticisms levelled at the business during site visits at the company's premises in Shildon, County Durham.

Mr Whittaker said records showed one vehicle in particular had been inspected six times since his investigation was

Legal News

Family firm's future hangs in the balance

Long-established company awaiting decision of traffic commissioner

THE FUTURE OF COUNTY DURHAM TAXI AND MINICOACHES LTD hangs in the balance as the company awaits a decision from the traffic commissioner on whether to allow it to continue to operate.

The company, which was founded by Margaret Martindale in 1978, has been run by her son, Mark, since his father's death in 1978.

What the vehicle examiner said: VOSA vehicle examiner Gordon Whittaker said the company's paperwork was "shambolic" and that the operator had not taken any steps to improve it.



Mark Martindale, who has been managing the business since his father's death, said he was "very sorry" about the findings of the inquiry.

He said he was "very sorry" about the findings of the inquiry and that he was "very sorry" about the findings of the inquiry.

Salient points

The company's licence was suspended on 15 January 2006 following a public inquiry into its operations.

It is not even clear whether he had an appropriate licence to drive a vehicle of that nature.

What the traffic commissioner said: The traffic commissioner said that the company's operations were "shambolic" and that the operator had not taken any steps to improve it.

What the vehicle examiner said: VOSA vehicle examiner Gordon Whittaker said the company's paperwork was "shambolic" and that the operator had not taken any steps to improve it.

What the traffic commissioner said: The traffic commissioner said that the company's operations were "shambolic" and that the operator had not taken any steps to improve it.

What the vehicle examiner said: VOSA vehicle examiner Gordon Whittaker said the company's paperwork was "shambolic" and that the operator had not taken any steps to improve it.

Key points

Deputy traffic commissioner Elizabeth Perrett found no action had been taken by Martindales in the week between the two hearings.

Elizabeth Martindale's reputation as the CPC holder is still intact, but is 'hanging by the merest of threads'.

conducted on July 11 at frequencies of between 30 to 33 days.

He added this was beyond the stated inspection frequency of 28 days and the paperwork did not show any of the nine faults listed, including a worn suspension bush, worn shock absorbers and a loose near side front seatbelt, as being rectified.

Mr Whittaker said: "Some of the records are not signed by anybody while others are countersigned by Mr Martindale but the signature of the inspector is missing.

"Quite a lot of the faults should have been spotted by the drivers during their walk round checks, but many of their reports are marked as 'nil defect', suggesting their are either not doing an adequate walk round check or are not completing the defect reporting sheets properly."

And Mr Jones added: "The tachograph records are not in any chronological order. There is a peg for each vehicle but the charts are interspersed with each other - some date from 2004,

others from 2005.

"There were not many charts to look at and, while those that are available do show some improvement, there do still seem to be some problems with correctly using the tachograph centrefield."

Mr Martindale admitted that he knew the business had been sent two warning letters by VOSA officials about these matters but had not fully appreciated their seriousness.

And he said in response to the other allegations: "The work was rectified but I got tied up with other things and just left the contractors to get on with it. I know the work was done as he has done so before."

Defence solicitor Roger Hird was alarmed Miss Perrett's response to this was to say she was considering revoking the licence. He told her: "If you decide to revoke the licence, then that is the end of the coach business and it would, in all likelihood, take the taxi business down with it through the clearance of liabilities.

"Suspending the licence would be just as devastating as there are a number of school and bingo contracts, that provide their bread and butter income, which would be lost and result in death by a thousand cuts rather than through death by decapitation.

"What I would ask for is for a sword of Damocles to hang over this business for a relatively short period of perhaps up to three months to allow vehicles to be put through an annual test and to give them an opportunity to put matters on a firmer footing."

Deputy traffic commissioner Miss Perrett, who adjourned the hearing for more than an hour to consider her verdict against legal precedents, eventually agreed to this as long as the operator adheres to the following conditions:

- Martindale's Taxis and Minicoaches must join a professional body within 14 days;
- must appoint a third party consultant within 14 days;
- must audit driver walk round checks not less than weekly;
- tachograph charts must be stored in chronological order;
- and must appoint an independent tachograph analysis firm within 28 days with a copy of their report to be sent to traffic area officials within 10 days of its completion.

Miss Perrett said while delivering her verdict: "Rather naively I expected to be told today that Mr Whittaker's advice had been followed and that everything with this operator was now shipshape.

"But I find nothing has been done and I am left in the same position as last week. Mr Martindale has not been candid with me and I find his excuses, which are both unconvincing and troubling, to be symptomatic of a person who is reactive rather than proactive.

"I find the repute of Mrs Martindale, as the CPC holder to be still intact but hanging by the merest of threads. She only appears to have fully appreciated how shambolically the business was being run at the public inquiry.

"I will allow this business to continue but the operator has to shape up. I will also reserve all future matters regarding this business to myself and I hope you realise that you are staring down the barrel of a gun.

"I will not be as lenient next time. This is the sword of Damocles."

Other Decisions

EASTERN TRAFFIC AREA

■ Cambridge, October 31, 2005
L F Bowen Ltd T/A YORKS COACHES
Director(s): Kevin Lower, Ronald Francis W Concannon and Alfred Howard Moseley. Bowen House, 104 Mariner, Lichfield Road Industrial Estate Tamworth, Staffordshire
PSV – S17 – Condition varied to authorise thirty-nine vehicles with effect from 2359 hours on January 14 2006.
PSV – Sch.3 – Colin John Rowe found to be of good repute.

■ Cambridge, December 9, 2005
Sullivan Bus & Coach Ltd T/A SULLIVAN BUSES. Director(s): Jason Finley, Dean Sullivan. Deards House, St Albans Road, Potters Bar, Herts
Licence Curtailed S17(2) – from 50 vehicles to 42 vehicles with effect from 2359 hours on December 31 2005

■ Cambridge, December 20, 2005
Rex Taylor T/A TAYLORS COACHES. Unit 1, Tayfar Trading Estate, Griffin Lane Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
PSV – S17 – Condition varied to authorise 4 vehicles with effect from 2359 hours on January 14 2006

NORTH EASTERN

■ Leeds, November 2, 2005
A COACH COMPANY (NE) LTD
Director(s): Steven Hyson, Steven Morrison. Blezzard Business Park, Seaton Burn, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE13 6DS
PSV – S14 – Application refused
PSV – Sch.3 – A Coach Company (NE) Ltd and directors, S Hyson, S Morrison, K Swan & H Wilkinson found not to be of good repute

NORTH WEST

■ Warrington, November 24, 2005
ACE PRIVATE HIRE LTD
Director(s): George Hobson, Mark

Anthony Hobson. Unit 4, Froxmer Street, Gorton, Manchester M18 8EF
PSV – S17 – Licence revoked with immediate effect

WEST MIDLANDS

■ Birmingham, January 9, 2006
Arthur William Robinson (Taxis) Ltd T/A CHAUFFEURS OF BIRMINGHAM
Director(s): S J Robinson, Arthur William Robinson. Curdworth Garage, Kingsbury Road, Curdworth, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands
As announced, the Deputy Traffic Commissioner's decision is as follows: – that the number of vehicles authorised on the company's licence is reduced from 17 to 12 with immediate effect; and that Mr Arthur William Robinson remains of good repute as a transport manager.

WESTERN

■ Slough, Berkshire, October 19, 2005
Danny Cocks T/A DANNY COCKS COACHES. Three Dees, Tremewan, Trewoon St Austell, Cornwall
PSV – S17 – Licence revoked with effect from 23:59 hours on 6 January 2006.
PSV – S28 – disqualified for 12 months from December 22 2005.
Public Inquiry heard by Deputy Traffic Commissioner Lester Maddrell on 15 December 2005 at Bideford.

■ Totnes, Devon, November 25, 2005
Graham Trevor Davies T/A EXECUTIVE VOYAGES. 2 Jubilee Meadow, Bethel, St Austell, Cornwall
PSV – S17 – Licence revoked with effect from 23:59 hours on Thursday 12 January 2006
PSV – S28 – disqualified with effect from 23:59 hours on Thursday 12 January 2006 for a period of 6 months
PSV – Sch.3 – operator found not to be of good repute, not of the appropriate financial standing, and requirement as to professional competence is not fulfilled.

Limits on unfair dismissal go up

THE LIMITS on payments and awards made to workers in employment rights cases rose last week in line with inflation. The increased limits affect:

- statutory redundancy payments;
- the basic and compensatory awards for unfair dismissal;
- the limit on guarantee payment made when employees are not provided with work; and
- the minimum basic award for unfair dismissal in health and safety and certain other cases.

Copies of the new Order are available at: www.opsi.gov.uk

Inquiry hears how wheel fell off bus

Couple given reduced licence and ban on weekend work

John and Margaret Shirran trading as Lumsden Garage, of Lumsden, Huntly, Scotland, found themselves up before the traffic commissioner following a VOSA inspection. At the end of the Public Inquiry, in Aberdeen on January 24, traffic commissioner Joan Aitken, gave an oral decision. This is a summarised note of what she said.



Traffic commissioner Joan Aitken gave Scottish operator Lumsden Garage a chance to redeem itself

This operator holds a Standard National Operators Licence with authority for eight vehicles and eight discs are issued. I was told at this Public Inquiry that his principal use of his licence is to undertake school contract work. He currently operates seven school runs per school day as well as school trips.

He does some private hire work at weekends though not on any regular contracted basis. When he applied for his licence he stated that he would give his vehicles safety inspections at four-weekly intervals and this appears to have happened until three or so years ago. Then he moved to eight-weekly inspections. What changed the frequency was the departure of their part-time mechanic, whom they did not replace, Mr Shirran taking the view he could cover the maintenance within his business.

The matter that causes me greatest concern is that on July 30, 2005 on the Raemoir to Banchory Road the nearside outer wheels of one of the operator's buses became detached. Eighteen passengers were on board. I was not told of any injuries or damage to property arising from the incident but patently this could have been a very serious incident.

There then arose the two other prohibitions of 2004 which should have put the operator on notice that he had to be more diligent. A 38% failure at annual test is not the worst I have seen, but is not good enough, as it means that at times of going to annual test the vehicles were not in prime condition.

I return to the matter of the wheel loss. The whole operator system and in particular the maintenance undertaking and prohibitions regime is there to ensure that those travelling by passenger carrying vehicle can do so safely and that other road users and property are protected from the potentially serious consequences when parts of vehicles come off.

I take from my study of the inspector's report that this was an entirely preventable occurrence. Had there been diligent proactive maintenance these wheels would not have come off. The operator let his standards fall and the result was this incident. Mine is the road safety and fair competition jurisdiction.

The operator appears to have skimped on the costs of replacing a part time mechanic - but has since realised that such an expenditure is necessary. He has realised that he must have in place proper tracking of vehicle maintenance and repairs including any wheel changing.

He wishes to return to his previously satisfactory history of operating safely. I have to balance the evidence I have heard and come to a proportionate decision. I recognise previous good history and his attempts to put right his deficiencies. No doubt the incident and this Inquiry will be disturbing to him for his livelihood could be imperilled.

I have come to the view that it would be disproportionate to revoke this licence. That said I am very concerned by wheel loss by an operator whose principal business is school contract work. I need to know that this operator can be trusted to operate safely in future.

I shall vary his licence by the following conditions - (1) the number of vehicles authorised to be operated will be reduced from eight to seven; (2) there will be no weekend operation from 7pm on Fridays to 6am on Mondays. These conditions will continue on the licence for six months. The operator will be prevented from registering any new services for a period of one year.



FEBRUARY

13-16: CPT London Home Counties Study Tour to the Netherlands, with Bova and Berkhof, Eindhoven and Maastricht. Members only. Sponsored by P&O Ferries and VVV Maastricht. Fax Ling Tang, CPT, 0207 240 6565 for details

28: Use of Bio Fuels in Transport, CBI Conference Centre, London. Address by Transport Minister Stephen Ladyman. 0207 787 1210, www.thewaterfront.co.uk

28: Reducing Crime on Public Transport Conference, Earls Court One, London. CBW media partner. Contact 020 7324 4330, www.neilstewartassociates.com/li226 for registration, or fax

0207 490 8830

MARCH

1-2: British Travel Trade Fair, NEC, Birmingham. www.britishtraveltradefair.com

8-9: Moving On Conference, Crown Plaza Hotel, Glasgow, www.moving-on-conference.co.uk, or tel: 0191 241 4523

9: Transport and Economic Development in Wales, Marriott Hotel, Cardiff. 0207 787 1210, www.thewaterfront.co.uk

14-16: International Road Transport Union 30th World Congress, Dubai World Trade Centre. www.iru.org

15: CPT London and Home Counties Discussion Evening,

Army and Navy Club, Pall Mall. Speakers include Phil White, CPT President/NEG. CPT members only. Ling Tang on 0207 240 3131

APRIL

4: London Transport Awards Dinner, London Hilton. 01224 263134

6-7: 30th UK Transport Conference and Exhibition: 'Wasted Miles, Wasted Money'. University of Nottingham. Phone CICC: 01223 881622 or annchapman@CICC-conferences.org.uk

7-9: Coach Tourism Council/Bonded Coach Holidays Conference 2006, Llandudno, North Wales. 0870 850 2839 or email admin@coachtourismcouncil.co.uk

coachtourismcouncil.co.uk

24-26: CPT Scotland Annual Conference, Gleneagles. Gail Hume 0131 272 2150, email: gailhume@cpt-uk.freemove.co.uk

25-27: CV Show, NEC, Birmingham

MAY

8-10: ALBUM Conference, Cardiff. Details: Karen Stafford-Smith 029 2078 7700.

9-13: Motortec automotive show, IFEMA, Madrid, Spain. www.motorteconline.com, +34 91 722 3000

21-28: CPT Study Tour 2006, Singapore/Kuala Lumpur. Details on 0207 240 3131

OCTOBER

10-12: CTA National Community & Voluntary Transport Event, G-Mex Centre, Manchester. www.communitytransport.com, or call 0870 774 3586

NOVEMBER

7-9: Euro Bus Expo, NEC. 0870 224 8619, eurobusxpo@expom.co.uk

14-17: FIAA '06 Exhibition (bus and coach), Madrid, Spain. +34 91 722 5000, www.ifema.es/ferias/fiaa/default.html

24 - 25: Coach and Bus Show 2006, RDS, Dublin, Ireland. Visit the website at www.cttc.ie, or email c.collins.cttc@iol.ie

11531

January hears how
wheel fell off bus

Couple given reduced...
...and...

NOVEMBER
...and...

...and...



Safari HD will standardise on 12.2m length in 2006

Temsa full of Eastern promise

Turkish builder investing in growth market

Martin Cole, technical editor

Turkish manufacturer Temsa is investing heavily in the future after a successful year in Europe.

Currently the largest independent bus and coach producer in the country, Temsa, part of the Sabanci Holding conglomerate, has now moved its administrative headquarters from Istanbul to Adana. The move coincides with a phase of expansion and reorganisation at the Adana plant. The project involves virtually doubling the existing covered area with new stores and additional production facilities, a training school, new spray booths and improved prototyping. All this is part of last year's €20 million investment which also saw the creation of a wider sales and marketing network and the establishment of a European Aftersales department based in Strasbourg. A further €20 million is to be spent this year.

Six staff have been appointed to support Temsa distributors in Belgium, France,

Germany, Italy, Hungary and Dubai.

Temsa's links with Istanbul have not been totally severed as a new research and development centre, Temsa R&D Technology AS, has been created on one of the capital's technology parks. This incorporates the latest in CAD/CAM design systems and it has links with Sabanci-sponsored universities where it is planned to find the best in new talent. The location also puts Temsa in close proximity to the country's scientific community.

Costing €2.5 million, the facility is also neighboured by Ford - which has similar goals. The prime function at present is aimed at materials used in coachbuilding and finding ways to equal or surpass the strength and durability of traditional materials by using advanced composites or laminates to offer increased resilience with greatly reduced weight.

Temsa president Mehmet Buldurgan said the immediate aims for Temsa were to

Timeline



Mehmet Buldurgan

1984 Temsa established as importer of Mitsubishi commercials and Komatsu construction equipment.
1987 First coach is built - a

Marathon-bodied vehicle based on a Mitsubishi chassis. Temsa also set up licenced production of Mitsubishi minibuses.

2001 Temsa reaches out to the European market and within four years introduced nine new models
2005 The Temsa factory had its highest ever coach turnover - producing 812 in 12 months.



establish a recognised and accepted brand. He told *CBW*: "We will strive to gain reputation and respect as a serious contender in the market. This means working at developing customer relationships and providing vehicles with which they can earn money."

Mr Buldurgan openly admitted Temsa is currently not earning a profit, but he believes building the brand is key to success. The company attends virtually all the major coach and bus exhibitions to promote its products and is continually developing its specifications in response to feedback. As quality and reliability become recognised and associated with Temsa, the company believes operators will more readily accept the brand as equal to many of its counterparts and offering a value-for-money alternative without any compromise.

Currently Temsa product in the UK and Ireland is limited to availability of the Safari HD coach based on the VDL SB4000 chassis. However, Temsa does not rule out greater flexibility on drivelines if the market demand is keen for alternatives. It has strong relationships with independent engine producers as well as major chassis builders. In addition, Temsa also stresses it will build its own chassis if this becomes necessary.

Virtually all its models are available

on chassis or as integrals and the latest development is to opt for space-frame design to improve the drive and ride quality.

Body mounting has been re-engineered to avoid the necessity for typical outrigger-type systems and this is said to reduce noise in addition to the aforementioned benefits. Traditional mild steel box-section body frames now benefit from considerable investment in upgrading the anti-corrosion treatment.

Bodies too have been lengthened and the standard availability for the UK will be 12.2m. Stainless steel body frames for Safari coaches are now being built specifically for customers in Austria. The largest of these, Post Bus, now lists Temsa as its preferred supplier and has placed significant repeat orders. Sales in France have also exceeded expectation but mainly centred on Temsa's Tourmaline school coach.

Part of the construction work on-site at Adana is aimed at housing close suppliers. Seat supplier Kiel has one of the units and assembles and trims seats there - avoiding delays between order processing and shipping and ensuring continuity on the coachbuilding lines in the main factory.

A new model joining the line-up is aimed initially at the home market. The company



Stylish no-frills dashboard



Kiel seating offers good comfort

was approached about building inter-urban buses and persuaded to tender for the work after designing the new Metropol around the specification.

Temsa in the UK

Arriva Bus & Coach is the UK distributor for Temsa and has been working closely with the company for two years.

MD Bob McLeod said: "We've helped Temsa evolve the Safari and to adapt it to meet all the UK certification requirements. They are good engineers and designers and not afraid to implement practical and sensible changes.

"It's been a very steady start. We ordered a batch of ten for last season but they were a bit behind on delivery and we missed the prime sales period - yet we are not unhappy with the Safari at all and have another batch on order.

"They will all be 12.2m long and we've settled on this specification because it does give operators that little extra flexibility on space without leading them into areas where weight becomes a severe handicap. A toilet version will also be an option on the new models.

"I think we'd be very interested in offering the stainless steel body option as soon as it becomes available. This will knock something like one tonne off the gross weight and obviously be better in terms of long life and, importantly, for fuel economy - reducing operating costs considerably.

"It's our belief Temsa is a long term player in the market but we need to start the ball rolling slowly to ensure everything is right before we or our customers become over-committed. We've put a lot into getting the product right for our market and we believe that is essential. If the quality and reliability are there then there will be a decent residual value attached to the brand and it will inspire buyers' confidence."

Temsa's future

Mehmet Buldurgan said the expansion of facilities at Adana would allow the company to double its production in due course. With over 40 distributors worldwide and ten dealers within Turkey, the company is ambitiously aiming at taking a 10% European market share in 2007. Despite the eagerness to build the brand name into one recognised for quality and reliability, these things do not come overnight. They take a long time to establish and underline the observation that 'good news travels slowly - bad news travels fast'.

Temsa is doing everything by the book. It has modern facilities, employs expert staff, invests in training its workforce, complies with all health and safety directives and works to ISO 9001 practices and ISO 14,001



€20m investment doubles the capacity at Adana



Groundwork preparation for new spray booths



Busy production lines are manned by well-trained staff

We've put a lot into getting the product right for our market and we believe that is essential

Bob McLeod, Arriva



Dual mirrors - the must-have for new coaches

**We will strive to
gain reputation
and respect
as a serious
contender in
the market**

Mehmet Buldurgan,
President, Temsa



Overhead panel is clean and simple

environmental standards.

The company has created the correct working conditions and practices in order to succeed but only the market will determine, long term, if the product suits its needs. It has already had a very encouraging response from Austria and France. Germany, against expectations, is also responding well and there is some interest from Italy. The UK market has suffered something of a false start with a late shipment impeding seasonal sales, but Arriva Bus & Coach is confident it has selected a manufacturer that is eager to deliver customer satisfaction and to implement changes required to suit individual markets.

Temsa capability

Temsa has come a long way in a few short years. It was established in 1984 as the

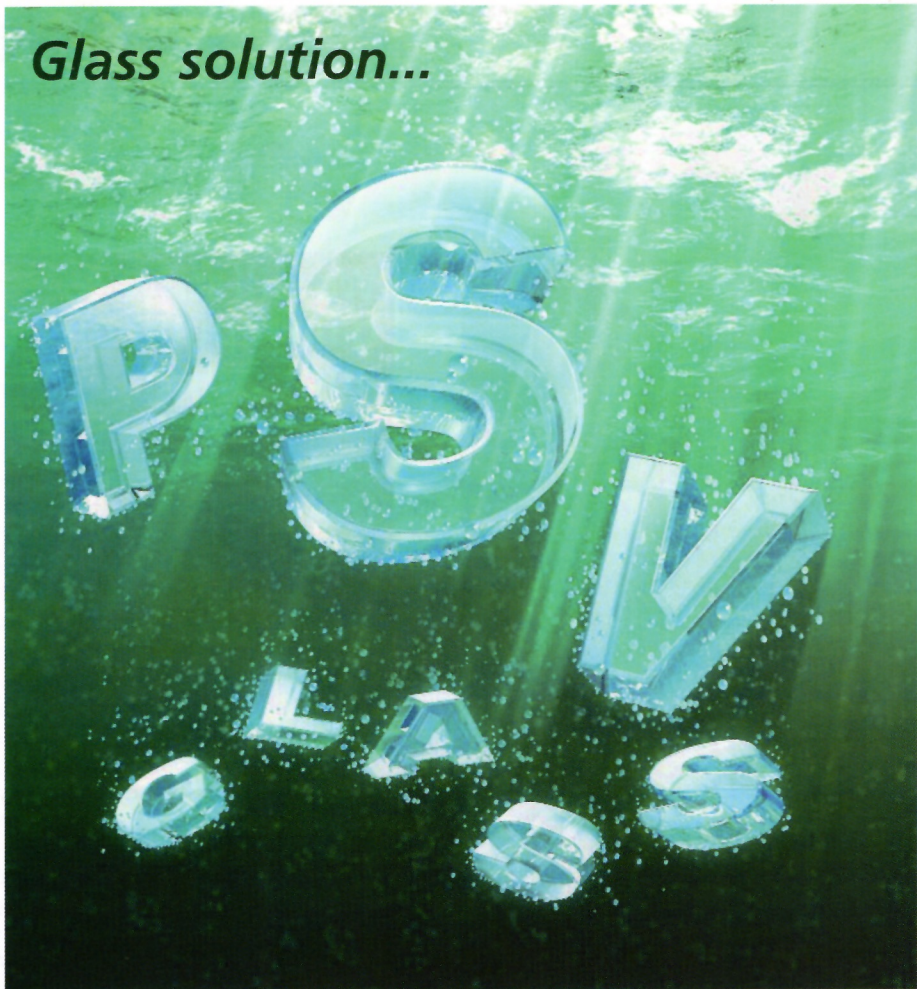
importer of Mitsubishi commercials and Komatsu construction equipment. One of 64 companies in the Sabanci Holding group it has huge backing and support and a dynamic attitude to business development.

The company built its first Marathon-bodied coaches, based on Mitsubishi chassis in 1987 and also set up licenced production of Mitsubishi minibuses using pressed-steel construction techniques acquired from Japan.

In 2001 Temsa looked at the European market for the first time and has introduced nine new models in just four years. The plant had the capability to produce up to 1,000 coaches, 2,000 mini/midicoaches and 7,500 light trucks.

The factory built 518 coaches in 2000, 812 in 2005 and is looking at a projected 927 for 2006.

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Schools face White Paper challenge

Conference looks for path through new education legislation

Mark Williams, editor

The Education White Paper could bring 'far-reaching' changes to school transport, a conference has been told.

The School Transport '06 event with the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers - held at London's Barbican Centre - was told by conference chair Tim Davies that giving parents more choice would inevitably impact on school bus provision.

"The changes could be far-reaching," he said. "It will fall to local authorities to make it work. And it will be up to operators to develop a quality,

affordable product."

Mr Davies, head of transport co-ordination at Devon County Council, told the conference that although there may be additional funding to provide a better network of public transport to school, it wouldn't be easy: "The challenge is to remove the barriers to parental choice without promoting the car-based 'school run.'"

'My Bus' works, says Metro

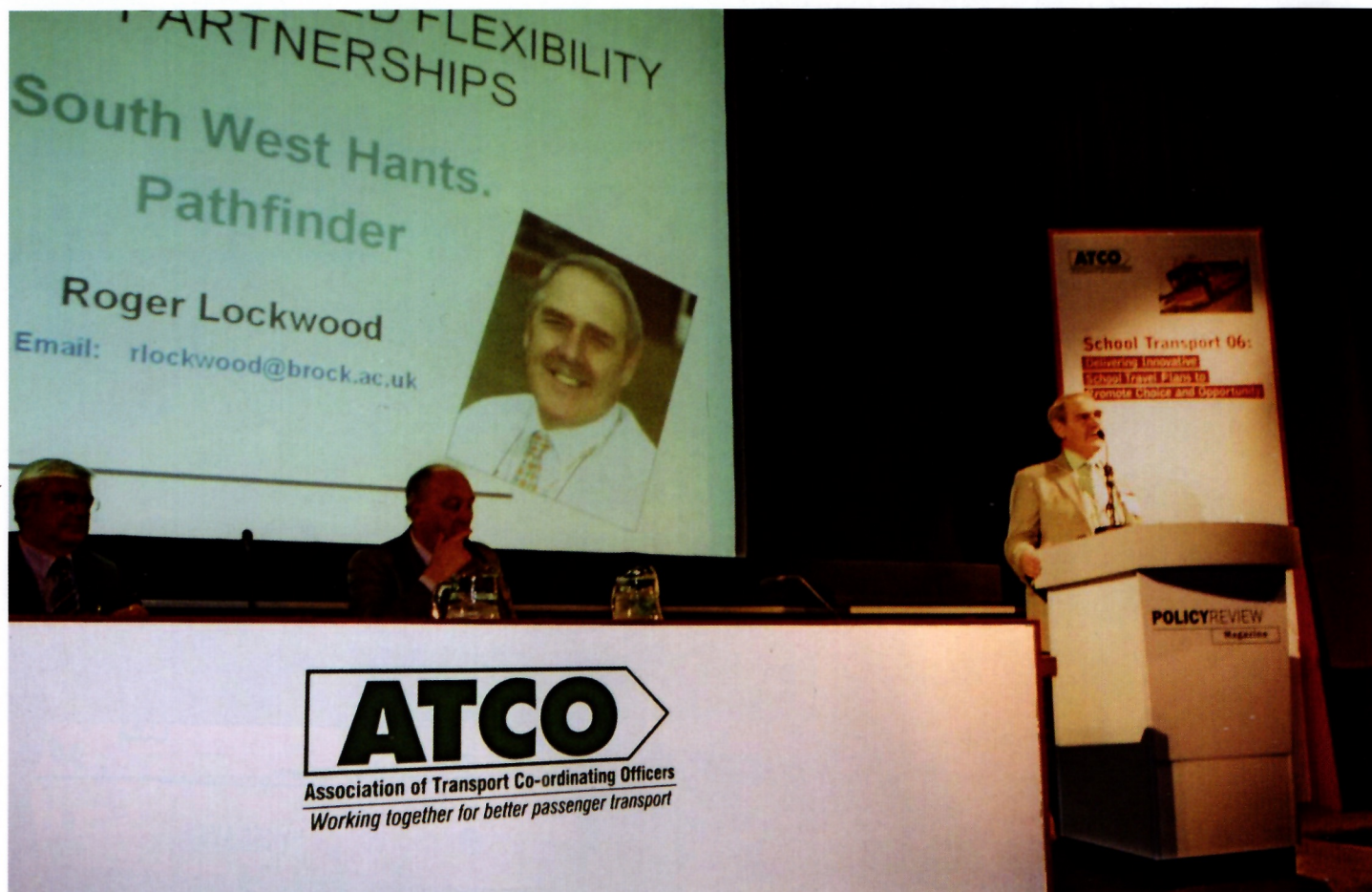
West Yorkshire's PTE Metro has made its 'yellow bus' My Bus scheme work, said its director of corporate services, Sheena Pickersgill.

"My Bus is a real example of a partnership working," said Mrs Pickersgill. "We have a 20-year vision for transport. We want to switch young people on to buses."

My Bus was set up with the aims of making the bus easy to understand and use, be accessible to everyone, attractive, reliable, affordable and efficient, she said: "The scheme addresses a lot of agendas, including the image of the bus. It also helps with education and attendance."

My Bus combines driver training with imaginative parent communication by phone or via

Schools conference



a dedicated website to reduce the barriers to bus services and improve the experience for children. Even drivers reported improvements, she said.

"One driver told us his colleagues can't believe he volunteers to drive schools, but he says the behaviour of the children has changed so much it's a real pleasure," she said.

Metro is responsible for carrying 48,000 children to school by bus. With 40 My Bus BMCs now serving 55 schools, 2,000 of those children get the 'yellow bus' treatment.

Mrs Pickersgill said the scheme had already reduced school-run mileage by 7,000 km per year, and traffic counts revealed a 15% reduction in cars where My Bus was working.

Now granted an additional £18.7 million over the next three years, My Bus is building a fleet of vehicles - now lowfloor buses - which are operated by local operators. Metro trains the drivers: "There is a lot of emphasis on driver training, and as a result, we get a lot of user satisfaction," said Mrs Pickersgill.

In future, WYPTE is proposing to launch a 'Transport Academy' aimed

at recruiting and retaining better driving staff, she said. Chaired by Metro, the West Yorkshire Transport Education Skills Alliance (WYTESA) is a partnership of organisations in the transport sector, which is working on the new Academy aimed at providing a qualification within their first year of employment.

Asked whether Metro owns the

We are trying to reduce the revenue cost by getting parents to pay for the use of buses for interschool and out of school times, such as in summer holidays

Sheena Pickersgill

buses, Mrs Pickersgill said: "We had to go through a complicated process where we have economic control of the buses. They will pass back to us when the Regulatory Control Order goes through, expected in March."

Deciding where to place My Bus, she said, was a question of identifying 'clusters' of children travelling to school, breaking the existing school contract and replacing it with My Bus.

In answer to a question about the cost of extending My Bus across the whole PTE area, Mrs Pickersgill said: "We are trying to reduce the revenue cost by getting parents to pay for the use of the buses for interschool and outside of school times, such as in summer holidays. With the costs at the moment, we are trying to keep within the current parameters but there are increased revenue costs."

She said the buses are being depreciated over 15 years. She admitted there may not be unlimited capital schemes to pay for more buses, but said: "We also have to look at what we can do if there is no capital funding, and talk to our operators. But what value do we put on getting children to school safely?"

ATCO plots path to better school services

Schools fighting the 'school run'

Marketing the school bus and setting school Travel Plans may be the key to stemming the tide of cars at the school gate, delegates were told.

Patricia Hayes, the co-chair of the Travelling To School Project set up by Alistair Darling and Charles Clark in 2003, said that while the Department for Transport has offered capital grants and could set targets, achieving them depends on schools and on parents.

"There are four main issues we have to tackle. Car use continues to rise; we have to halt childhood obesity; climate change must be tackled; and there are quality of life objectives," she said. "We are still fighting an uphill battle with congestion."

She explained that the percentage of cars on the school run in the morning peak has risen from 18% in 2002 to 23% in 2004: "We need to adopt techniques to mitigate against this change. There is a limit to the amount we can do with infrastructure and road pricing."

"So the emphasis of the project is on marketing. Local authorities are showing much more initiative than three years ago when we started. The aim is to get Travel Plans into every school by 2010. By March, 10,000 schools will have School Travel Plans."

Co-chair of the DfT's Travelling To School Initiative, Penny Jones, said that school choice is only currently a reality for the well-off: "Only 10% of children entitled to free school meals travel more than three miles to school, yet 18% of the rest make a long journey," she said.

Outlining a three-point approach, Ms Jones said the priority had to be Travel Plans, getting local authorities to look carefully at bus, cycling and walking provision. The second priority is to extend the right of low-income families to free school transport.

The third area of focus will be to use a 'pathfinder' authority to test the solutions. She said a key focus would be reducing the limit for free transport from three miles to two and provide after-school transport: "To achieve this we may need to charge all but 'protected' children. There is £4 million on pump-priming and up to £12m revenue support available."

She said the commercial bus and taxi would benefit, but that extending school transport provision may make journeys more economic. But she

warned: Transport is one area where we will be looking to save money."

Danes have conquered problem

Troels Andersen, the senior transport planner for Odense Municipality in Denmark, outlined the methods his authority had chosen to improve school access.

Mr Andersen said Denmark has to provide free school transport by bus or taxi in any situation in which the route to school is considered hazardous, and this had led to investment in infrastructure, to reduce traffic hazards: "We have now established 200 projects and achieved a 29% accident reduction," he told delegates.

"Nine fewer injuries per year saves the state £1.5m, so the money spent has had a net benefit for the economy – it saves four times as much as we spend."

Mr Andersen said that Danish schools culture has produced a situation in which 80% of children aged 11 to 16 walk or cycle to school. Surveys of children's opinion showed that the issues of distances, traffic speed and congestion had a quantifiable effect on how children get to school.

With a 33% increase in the distance to school, 55% more children travel by car; with a 25% increase in speed limits, there are 5% fewer children cycling to school; and if there is 33% more traffic, 33% more children do not walk or cycle.

Asked by Janet Mills, school travel manager for Cheshire County Council,



Troels Andersen



Tim Davies



Neil Holt



Sheena Pickersgill

We will try to use the [My Bus] fleet for private hire. We do a lot of work with children's attractions. We have had no adverse reaction from operators

Neil Holt, West Yorkshire PTE



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Sian Thornthwaite

In November 2000, in advance of the 2001 election, Prescott announced that he would seek £100 million to fund half-price concessionary fares. That promise never made it to the manifesto

Tim Davies, Devon County Council



Penny Jones



Mike Ashworth



Linda Howard

why Denmark had surveyed children instead of parents, Mr Andresen said: "We avoided asking parents on purpose. We needed to be in touch with children, and give them their democratic rights - we trust their opinions more."

Another delegate asked whether the parents of Odense are able to choose which school their children attend: "They can choose, but there are not many reasons to choose anything but the local school; they are all of the same standard," he said.

Government pays almost £2 for each bus ride

Leading transport consultant Sian Thornthwaite told delegates that the £1 billion spent on around one million school children who travel by bus came at a cost.

"There are 625,000 car journeys averted each day by school buses, about 32% of secondary school children are using a bus service. The average cost to the country is £1.82 per single journey, but bus transport is statistically completely safe - there is not one fatality in a statistically typical year," she said.

"Half the expenditure on statutory transport is on 10% of the pupils, and they are special needs. This is a key point, because any change brought about by the White Paper will not address that cost.

"The number of children transported in wheelchairs has not risen in recent years, but what has risen is out-of-county placements and single-use transport - usually because of behavioural problems."

Ms Thornthwaite warned that introducing charges for pupils currently eligible for free transport - as proposed for the White Paper - would have an effect on the 'traditional elasticities' of school transport: "The main evidence for post-16 year olds isn't good. If you are only providing free transport for those on income support, there is a lower willingness to use the bus and pupils are more likely to go by car."

Ms Thornthwaite also warned that the pathfinder projects may find that they cannot find sufficient buses at peak times to provide a full service: "This will be a balancing act for LEAs. You can widen choice and cut congestion, and reduce casualties, but you are unlikely to recover the costs [of extended provision]."

In answer to a question from Clare

Towney, of West Yorkshire PTE, Ms Thornthwaite said the per-journey cost for proving 'yellow bus' services could rise from the current £1.82 average to £2.50 per journey. She also said the current £1bn spend "is not enough."

"We spend 2% of our education budget on school transport. The USA spends 4% to 5%."

Mr Davies added: "One problem is that the education budget for transport is seen as separate from other transport budgets - there is no joined-up thinking."

Ms Thornthwaite replied: "Schools transport is very much an invisible service."

We know the face of traditional school transport - it's typically older vehicles

Linda Howard, First Student

Partner operators for results, says Lockwood

Hampshire-based transport manager for Brockenhurst College, Roger Lockwood, outlined the way he'd provided transport for 13 schools in the New Forest area.

He said providing connections for 2,000 pupils to link 13 schools with 11 different NVQ programmes over an area of 200 square miles had been the result of good co-ordination... and talking to coach and bus operators.

"We had to suggest the schools changed timetables on set days. With a 9.30am start and 2.30pm finish we could 'parasite' the transport system. You need a partnership with operators, not just schools."

Mr Lockwood said talking to Marchwood Motorways and other operators had identified 'dead' positioning runs back to depot: "We had to share ideas. People said it wouldn't work, and for the first one or two months, it didn't. But we asked if we could use the return run from schools, and found we could get transport at half the price."

"The most important thing is developing collaboration. We talk about transport in our area as much as we talk about the curriculum."

Are you covered?

Your insurance may safeguard you against theft, accidents and damage, but what about the bigger picture?

Adam Bernstein

Affected by the Buncefield Oil Depot explosion in December 2005? Remember the floods that virtually destroyed the Cornish town of Boscastle in 2004? Apart from the obvious human misery caused by these disasters, a common bond that they share is that innocent businesses were prevented from working through no fault of their own. Some survived but many did not.

As a businessman or woman, common sense if nothing else tells you that to operate a business without insurance – whether buildings, contents, motor or employers – would be tantamount to commercial suicide. Yet why do so many businesses cover those elements but not cover their businesses against unforeseen interruption. Business Interruption Insurance – BI to the insurance profession – is what they are missing.

BI has many facets, but in its ultimate aim, it seeks to maintain the businesses profits in the event of disaster of some kind. The problem that all businesses face is that if, for example, the premises are flooded, destroyed in a fire, or blown up because of terrorist activity, time is required to get the business fully functioning again. Costs will still be incurred while production is down or non-existent – staff still need to be paid even though the business cannot use them in the short term. This becomes particularly acute as the business is not in a state to bring in any money.

What is Business Interruption Insurance?

BI operates in three ways. Firstly, BI covers the fixed, or ongoing, costs of a business which cannot be met out of any financial reserves the company may have. The majority of these need to be paid irrespective of whether work is possible. This might include leasing and staffing costs, business rates, and mortgages that need to be paid.

Secondly, BI policies will cover any increased or new costs that are required to get the business up and running. This could cover finding a new site, redirecting post and telephones, acquiring new equipment, paying

overtime, using 'friendly competitors' to complete orders, buying new supplies possibly at a higher rate, and advertisements to tell your customers of the temporary change in business circumstances.

Finally, a BI policy will pay enough money to maintain the level of net profits that the company had insured for.

BI is quite distinct from buildings and contents insurance in that they purely replace or repair the physical items insured, whereas BI ought to be thought of as a way of keeping a business alive while it recovers from a disaster.

What Insurers Look For

Should a business need to claim on their BI policy, they need to be aware that the insurers will need to see accounts before any payments are made.

Insurers use a variety of accepted accounting principles to establish their liability to pay a claim. They would look for information on variable costs such as raw materials etc that rise or fall depending on the required production/sales; data on fixed costs such as business rates – things that do not vary according to the level of sales; net profit; revenue levels; and gross profit – the difference between revenue and variable costs.

So make sure that once you've taken out a BI policy you keep the documentation and detailed business

accounts information safe because without the official paperwork you may have a devil of a job proving what you're entitled to.

It might seem bureaucratic at the time, but no insurer will pay out a claim unless the loss can be quantified. So if you have not got copies of your accounts, expect to have to prove the claim some other way.

Payment times do vary. It is difficult to quantify the time it takes to pay a claim since every case is different. However, insurers will process the claim on receipt of accounted losses so that they avoid any further liability for losses.



Floods don't have to affect your property to affect your business. Are you covered?

Check The Policy

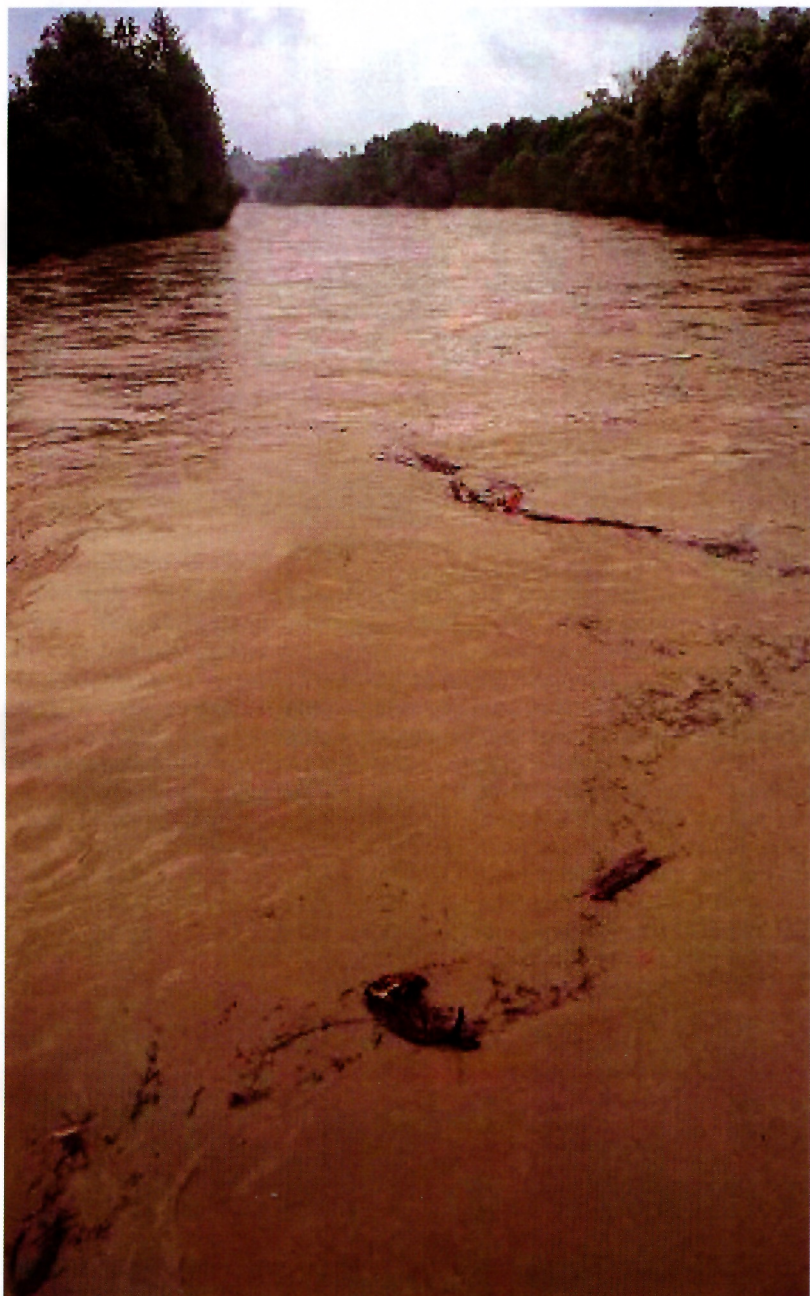
Whenever choosing a BI policy, or any other insurance policy for that matter, it is vital to check the wording used by the insurers. By their very nature, insurers use terminology which is neither vague or open to confusion. For example, a policy may not cover any subsidiary companies so if a business acquires another, it will need to change the terms of the policy.

Reducing The Premium

There are ways, as with any other type of insurance, of reducing the premiums.

Risk, and therefore premium, can be reduced by either greater fire protection or by separating areas of the working

Common sense tells you that to operate a business without insurance would be tantamount to commercial suicide



environment; by planning very carefully the organisation of the work processes; and by writing a detailed contingency plan. The plan should cover actions to be taken following the disaster, keeping a detailed log of contact names and numbers of favoured contractors and suppliers who will help the business restart quickly. At the very minimum, the plan will show the business areas of risk where pre-emptive action can be taken. Update and test it regularly.

Other tips - make sure you regularly review the level of cover required. Insurers reckon that most policyholders are underinsured. If they find that this is the case with you, they'll only pay out a proportion of the claim.

Premium Levels

Naturally, the amount you'll be charged for BI will depend on the type of business and the length of time you'll want to be paid for. However, you can expect to pay between £300 and £400 per year based on a gross profit of £250,000 depending on business sector and location. It goes without saying that the premium is dependent on the information supplied by the proposer.

For more information on the insurer for you, find a local broker in the Yellow Pages.

It is a harsh reality that every business needs to be 100% effective for 100% of the time - any disturbances will diminish the chances of survival.

Briefly

Bus drivers in Liverpool are threatening strike action after a driver was allegedly suspended for speaking to the local press. Mark Edlin, 26, spoke to the Liverpool Echo after an attack by vandals but was hauled over the coals by Arriva bosses for not obeying company procedure. Union representatives were meeting with the company this week.

Arriva's The Shires coaching unit at Garston near Watford is no longer for sale. An Arriva spokesman said: "The school/college contracts that were operated there have been reallocated elsewhere and the drivers who wanted to move to employment elsewhere in Arriva have done so. There have been no compulsory redundancies."

Bristol Council is making more cash available to support bus services. £2.4m has been earmarked for improvements to services in the northern and eastern residential parts of the city, but will also be used to support community services like Dial-a-Ride and shopmobility. Some of the money will also be used to develop a new accessible travel website.

A Cambridge MP is to raise his concerns about Concessionary Travel with the Secretary of State for Transport. Jim Paice, MP for South East Cambridgeshire, said: "On the face of it the government is being generous... but the reality is some bus journeys may become more expensive." Passengers used to half price travel throughout the county will now have to pay full fares outside their local authority boundaries.

First PMT says its maintenance woes are behind it after introducing robust new systems and processes. Engineering director Peter Iddon said: "We now have a simple, non-negotiable golden rule that states unless a vehicle is fully legal and safe, and is certified as such by a nominated supervisor, it isn't allowed to leave the workshop." The FTA now audits 40% of the company's fleet each year, randomly selecting vehicles, and giving 24 hours notice.

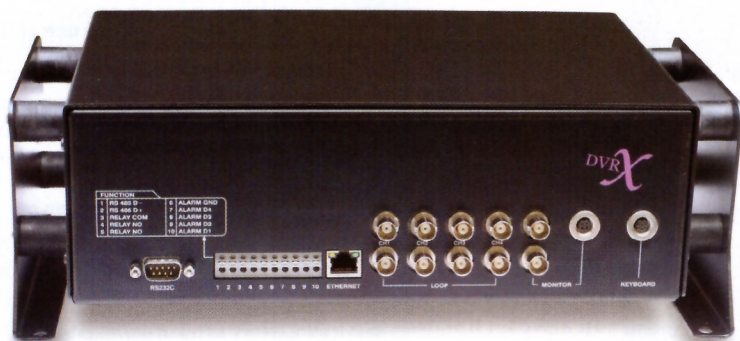
Nexus stopped a gricer taking photos of buses at a depot in Sunderland after officials thought he might be a terrorist. Alan Turnock, 61, has been taking bus photos for 50 years and described the situation as "complete madness". A spokesman for Nexus said: "Our staff acted appropriately in asking the gentleman to take his pictures outside the bus station."

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John Groves gains ITS0 standard

John Groves Ticket Systems has been appointed by Wayfarer as its UK distributor for small-fleet operators.

The agreement will cover the whole of the UK, with John Groves aiming to enhance service levels to operators of fewer than 30 vehicles.

Wayfarer director of marketing, Paul Moirano, said: "This arrangement will deliver the best of both worlds for those customers running up to 30 buses."

Wayfarer's products include everything to meet local government-driven smartcard implementation, providing not only the on-bus machinery of card readers integrated with paper ticket sales, but back-office software and equipment to monitor income route-by-route.



Graham Green (back left) and Tony Walton (back right). Paul Moirano (front left) with John Groves - MD John Groves Ticketing Systems

John Groves said:

"Wayfarer ticketing technology continues to lead the way. Our experience in this segment of the marketplace will ensure that customers maximise the operational benefits of machines such as the TGX150."

Wayfarer's TGX150 (above) has just become the first and only ticket machine to achieve ITS0 certification - the international standard. From April onwards, Wayfarer will be delivering machines upgraded to this standard, not least across Scotland just as its concessionary card scheme comes into play.

"Ticketing equipment is at the heart of the ITS0 vision," said Wayfarer's technology director David Ellis. "This certification is therefore a fundamental development in turning the ITS0 concept into reality for local authorities and bus operators, and in proving the advantages of ITS0 to potentially millions of smartcard users."

Mr Ellis said earlier TGX150 machines can now be modified to meet the ITS0 standard for integration into smartcard schemes.

■ www.wayfarer.co.uk
John Groves Ticket Systems
Call: 01294 471133



EON can provide a 3D model of any vehicle

Take a 3D coach tour

A new 'virtual vehicle' environment can allow operators to have a 3D tour of their yet-to-be-built coach.

Design Academy's EON Sales Assistant software - already used for specifying customised cars and executive jets - is now being touted to the coach building industry, providing manufacturers and sales teams with the opportunity to progress beyond showing sample moquettes and colours, but showing how they will look in the vehicle's interior.

Not only is the software claimed to provide a virtual reality during design, but as the materials specified change, the programming keeps a running total of the additional cost.

Ken Swain, MD of Design Academy, said: "This software brings a new bus or coach design to life, grabbing the customer's attention with the most realistic and compelling 3D visuals ever available. For manufacturers, it eliminates the need for expensive prototyping, while for customers, it gives a precise representation of what their vehicle will look like"

EON Sales Assistant is already used by aeronautical firms such as Boeing and Cessna.

■ www.design-academy.co.uk
Call: 0161 246 6022

Operators sign up for on-line system

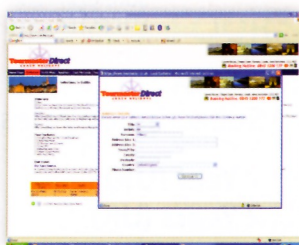
Roeville's WebRes.Net on-line booking system is gathering a good following since its launch last year, with customers including Reynolds Diplomat of Watford.

Designed to integrate with its Tours 2000 reservations package, the WebRes.Net package provides a real-time inventory of available space so that buyers do not need to have direct contact with the operator to book and pay deposits on their holidays.

The system allows web-based customers to 'see' right into the reservations system before they have to make any decision to give personal details, so they

are free to surf through the options before making any commitment. Payment is made via credit/debit cards on-line via Commidea ICP's secure payment system, which actually clears funds before reserving a seat.

Once a booking is made, the customer is sent confirmation



Just click to book

by email, and in the case of excursions - often booked at the last minute - an email ticket is sent, too. The system even has a facility for travel agent access, so that commission sales can be added to the operator's own portal.

Roeville Computer Systems has now upgraded its website so that prospective buyers can actually see the WebRes.Net system in operation via current clients' websites.

All of the Roeville products are fully explained on the company's comprehensive web-site.

■ www.roeville.com
Call: 01302 841333

Smart move for ACT

Applied Card Technologies has won the contract to supply Nottinghamshire County Council with one of the UK's first Integrated Transport Smartcard Organisation (ITS0) schemes.

NCC's existing *freedom card* scheme will now be migrated to ITS0 standard and rolled out to 110,000 card holders for seamless use within multiple transport modes.

■ www.card.co.uk
Call: 01249 751200

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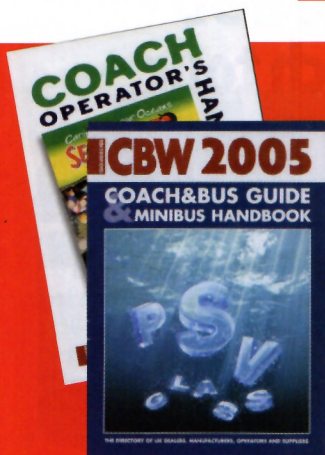
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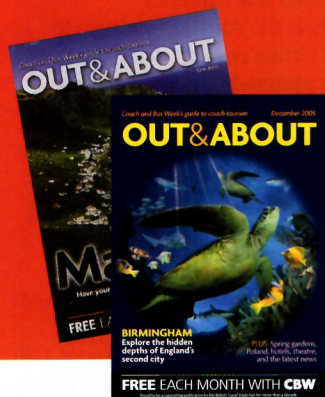


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THIS WEEK



Darling's way
Transport secretary looks to 'third way' for Quality Partnerships **page 4**

Think tank
Tour operators reveal their visions for the future of the market - and we were there **page 18**



Digitachs
Are you ready for the digital revolution? CBW explains all... **page 24**

Where now?
The bus industry's leading lights deliver their verdict **page 28**



Hello Yellow

60 extra schoolbuses for West Yorkshire as yellow buses get Government seal of approval **page 6**

NEW! Minibus magazine inside



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Have you taken delivery of a new vehicle and want to tell the world about it? Email all the details and pictures to andrew.peace@rouncymedia.co.uk or write to the address on page 3



CALLINAN COACHES

Galway operator Callinan Coaches is about to take delivery of this Volvo 9700 Prestige Plus coach among an order for ten 9700s.

This tabled 34-seater in Volvo Ocean Race livery, exhibited at Kortrijk last year, is destined to carry golf fans when the Ryder Cup is staged in Ireland this year. It sports Kiel leather upholstery, five tables with power for electronic equipment, aircraft-style multi-socket audio, TFT video monitors, as part of Volvo's superb Sound and Vision package.

Ah-mounted camera facing the courier means the passengers can see the courier as well as hear him or her. And of course, there's a toilet, fridge, vacuum cleaner and wardrobe built in.

Under the skin of the vehicle - dubbed the Prestige Plus 'Plus' - is Dynafleet Online, Volvo's GPS-based vehicle management system which allows complete monitoring of the vehicle's on-board systems and location while it is away.

MD Tommy Callinan said: "I was impressed by the factory that makes it in Poland when I visited. It's modern and geared up for short lead times and reliable delivery. Perhaps the biggest 'plus' is that the 9700 has whole-vehicle dealer support, and we get great service from Irish Commercials, Volvo's agent in Ireland."

The remaining nine are all 49-seaters, two of which will be in CIE livery for use on the extensive express services Callinan runs under contract.

FACT FILE

Operator: Callinan Coaches, Claregalway, Ireland
Chassis/body: Volvo 9700/ B12B
Engine: D12C 420bhp
Transmission: I-Shift
Seats: 34
Spec: Five tables, air-con, Sound and Vision entertainment package, wardrobe, toilet, fridge, Dynafleet Online monitoring
Bought from: Irish Commercials



KOWLOON MOTOR BUS

The follow-on for orders for 125 12-metre 'deckers' for Kowloon Motor Bus in Hong Kong is a batch of 38 to very high specification.

The Wrightbus vehicles, built on Volvo B9TL chassis, offer passengers high-back seats, air conditioning, tinted glazing, access for wheelchairs and improved lighting and headroom. And that's just on the surface.

Beneath the skin of the 80-seat buses, which run 20 hours a day, are a new multiplexed wiring system with in-built diagnostics, and a CCTV system linked to the multiplexing so that it can warn the driver immediately of any

developing vehicle faults.

Mark Nodder, vice-president of business development at Wrightbus in Northern Ireland, said: "KMB is the world's biggest operator of double-deck buses, and sets high standards. We entered the double-deck market less than five years ago, and when we did so we were determined to produce a vehicle which would be a marked advance. There are now almost 1,400 Wrightbus double-decks in service."

The vehicles can accommodate 121 people including standees.

FACT FILE

Operator: Kowloon Motor Bus, Hong Kong
Chassis/body: Volvo B9TL/ Wrightbus
Engine: Volvo
Transmission: Automatic
Seats: 80 + 41
Spec: Air-con, high-back seats, CCTV
Bought from: Wrightbus



FOUR SQUARE COACH COMPANY

Pontefract-based Four Square has invested in its first-ever new vehicle - this Volvo B12M with Sunsundegui bodywork.

The 49-seater, supplied with air conditioning, drinks maker, demountable toilet and DVD package will be used by the company on its private hire work, much of which is with local schools and colleges.

Managing director Steve Riggott said: "We used to undertake a lot of European contract hire, but since we took the decision to stop that back in 2002 we've gone from strength to strength."

"That's why we're in a position to invest in our first brand-new Volvo, and we're confident more will follow."

FACT FILE

Operator: Four Square Coach Company, Pontefract
Chassis/body: Volvo B12M/ Sunsundegui Sideral
Engine: Volvo
Transmission: I-Shift
Seats: 49
Spec: Air-con, DVD, toilet
Bought from: Volvo Buses



Stertil website goes live

Stertil UK's new website has "gone live." Central to the design of the new site was a desire to offer customers a brief overview of the company's background and its vehicle lift products and services, whilst also allowing the user the opportunity to download specific brochures, see existing installations, view case studies and request further information or a site visit. The Stertil UK website, encompassing both Stertil-Koni vehicle lifts and Stertil-Stokvis dock products, now offers a user-friendly interface and easy navigation, ensuring information is accessed with the minimum of fuss. View the site at www.stertiluk.com



Penta takes on AdBlue

Greenox AdBlue – the reagent necessary for operating Euro IV specification vehicles employing SCR emissions technology – is to be marketed throughout Europe by chemical distribution specialist Penta. Manufactured by Kemira GrowHow Oyj, Greenox AdBlue is a urea-based liquid with ammonia content that reacts with the exhaust catalyst and reduces nitrous oxide to nitrogen and water.

■ Penta's distribution channels in the UK will be operated by Tennants Distribution Ltd.
■ For more information visit the website at www.kemira-growhow.com/English/AdBlue

Translink fits Bridgewatch

Northern Ireland's Translink has ordered Bridgewatch units from Bridgeclear Ltd of Crewe for fitment on all recent new builds of double-deck buses and coaches.

Translink made the decision following extensive three-year trials to match the bridge warnings to those which are most useful to alert their drivers. The company believes Bridgewatch offers the best standard of warning in relation to low bridges and bus station awnings – all of which are

stored in their Bridgewatch units' database.

James Erwin, Engineering Manager at Translink says: "Bridgeclear provides clear warnings to our drivers well before a potential bridge bash. We are also looking to include other hazards in the system including narrow roads and soft verges in the future."

All 80 ALX400 double-decker buses delivered in 2005 from Alexander Dennis were fitted during build. The 25 double-decker coaches coming from



Ayats in Spain for delivery in 2006 are also to be fitted with Bridgewatch. In this instance, Bridgewatch displays its warnings through the driver's CCTV monitor screen.

Translink has now placed a follow on order with Alexander Dennis for 29 more Volvo/ALX400 double-deckers. These also feature Bridgewatch with the warnings incorporated into the CCTV systems.

Details from Bridgeclear Ltd, Tel/Fax 01270 588039 or e-mail mail@bridgeclear.com



Reliance gets CCTV from deView

CCTV system supplier deView has scored a notable success with recent installations of its DV-M8 Mobile Digital Video units aboard double deckers operated by Reliance Motor Services of York.

The DV-M8 recorder system is built by Security Manufacturing Ltd and supplied through Sewell of Leeds - who arranged to demonstrate the deView DV-M8 and gave Reliance the option of a range of deView cameras and driver screens to meet their needs.

John Duff, owner of Reliance, commented: "We have been looking for a modern unit for the school contracts and local bus services but wanted to avoid cooling fans and keep moving parts to a minimum. The DV-M8 enabled us to download footage quickly and the capacity of the recorder was large enough to add extra camera functions such as forward view. On installation we found

that the image quality from the cameras was better than expected, which is a real bonus. The additional use of a forward view camera will help eliminate fraudulent insurance claims from any road incidents. Also the system is able to record the rear view continuously to help in claiming damages where rear damage was sustained. Overall the MDVR system is a great asset to our operation."

DV-M8 can be installed into any vehicle type and configured to provide internal or external views. Camera installation is fast with well-designed camera mounting making set up quick and simple. DV-M8 configuration options include easily integrated reversing camera systems. The company says they install directly to the vehicle without compromising reliability.

Details of deView products can be found at www.devview.com

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Scania Capacity - year 2003 - 53 seats	£118,000
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1992-94 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF 5 speed automatics,
3 axles, Alexander bodies, 102 coach seats,
air con, new test



1995 M REG VOLVO B6

ZF Gearbox, Volvo engine, Alexander body
40 seats large choice. These buses are a good
opportunity to buy modern buses at
reasonable prices.



1996 N REG VOLVO OLYMPIAN,

Northern Counties body,
single door, 73 seats.



ROUTEMASTERS . . . Last chance to buy a
London Classic. 72 seaters with Cummins
engines, all refurbished in the 90's.
Ideal buses for weddings, special events
or just a toy!!



VOLVO B10M AUTOMATIC

Fitted East Lancs Pioneer,
re-bodied in 1998,
80 coach seats with belts



1982-84 MCW METROBUSES

Half open tops, Gardner 6LXB/Voith,
From £7,000



1983 LEYLAND TIGER

Plaxton Supreme 5, short test,
good condition



1992-94 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF, Alexander R type
bodies, either 74 seat dual door or
78 single door, large choice



1991 K LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF, 78 seaters,
low height, good tests



1987 E REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Gardner 6LXB/Hydracrylic, Optare body,
76 seats, good tests



1983 Y Reg Leyland Olympian, Gardner/Hydracrylic, 77 seater, lowheight, new test.



1997/8 R REG DENNIS DARTS SLF, Cummins/Allison, Plaxton Pointer 2 bodies, 36 seats



1994 L REG DENNIS DART, Cummins/Allison, Plaxton Pointer, 40 seater.



1997 P REG VOLVO OLYMPIANS, Alexander bodies, 2 doors, 68 seats, or can be single doored and upseated to 78



1983/4 LEYLAND TIGERS, PLAXTON SUPREME BODIES, recent retrims, belts, superb condition for age.



1990 DENNIS CONDORS, Arriving now from Hong Kong. Cummins L10 engines, Voith 3 speed auto gearboxes, tinted windows, full air-con throughout, 94 seats with 2 doors or 95 with single door conversion. Refurbished to Firstgroup spec 4 years ago. Limited number available.



1989 G REG LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Cummins L10/ZF, Northern Counties body,
2 doors, 75 seats



1988 LEYLAND TIGER

Repowered with Volvo THD engine,
Plaxton 3500, 51 seats, toilet, good
condition, private plate



1986/7 LEYLAND OLYMPIANS

Gardner/hydracrylic, ECW semi-low height
bodies, 68 seats, long tests, some single
door, 72 seaters also available, from £7000



1998 R REG DAF SB100 Automatic, Plaxton Pointer 2 body, 53 seats



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2000 X REG FORD TRANSIT 150 DIESEL



5 SPEED MANUAL, LONG WHEEL BASE, PAS, HIGH ROOF, HIGH SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH LOW STEP, 8 HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING FOR W/CHAIRS, RICON TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER, LOW MILES, 36,000 MILES.

V REG VOLKSWAGEN LT46



TURBO DIESEL, PAS, LWB, WHITACRES CONVERSION, LARGE POWER PLUG DOOR, HIGH ROOF, 16 REMOVABLE HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING, RATCLIFFE UNDERFLOOR TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER, COIF.

V REG MERCEDES SPRINTER 410D



TURBO DIESEL, PAS, LWB, HIGH ROOF, MELLOR CONVERSION, FRONT ENTRY SIDE DOOR WITH LOW STEP, 15 REMOVABLE HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING, RATCLIFFE UNDERFLOOR TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER, CHOICE.

1996 P REG MERCEDES 609D



WADHAM COACHBUILT BODY, LWB, P A S, FULL HEIGHT DOOR, 16 REMOVABLE SEMI HIGH BACK SEAT'S OR 6 WHEEL CHAIRS & 4 SEATED, UNWIN TRACKING, RATCLIFF TAIL LIFT, EBERSPACHER HEATER, EX LOCAL COUNCIL, GOOD CONDITION

Y REG TOYOTA HIACE



2.4 DIESEL, 5 SPEED, PAS, MEDIUM WHEEL BASE, LOW ROOF, SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH STEP, 3 SEATS 7 TWO WHEEL CHAIR POSITIONS, Q-SRAINT RESTRAINT SYSTEM, RICON FULLY AUTOMATIC TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER MINT CONDITION, 33,000 miles

Y REG 2001 VOLKSWAGEN TRANSPORTER



2.5TDI AUTOMATIC, POWERED STEERING, MWB, SIDE LOADING DOOR, 5 SEATS PLUS 1 WHEEL CHAIR, UNWIN TRACKING, WITH SIDE MOUNTED RICON TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER, MINT CONDITION, 33,000 MILES

1999 T REG PEUGEOT BOXER



2.5 DIESEL, 5 SPEED, PAS, L W B, EUROMOTIVE CONVERSION SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH STEP, 11 SEMI HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON TAIL LIFT, 52,000 MILES. V GOOD CONDITION, ONE OWNER

X REG 2001 FORD TRANSIT 2.5 TD



MANUAL, CHASSIS DEVELOPMENT COACHBUILT BODY, PAS, 12 REMOVABLE HIGH BACK SEAT'S, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON TAIL LIFT, POWER DOOR FRONT ENTRY, ONE OWNER, EX LOCAL AUTHORITY, 63,000 MILES CHOICE OF TWO

2000 V REG PEUGEOT BOXER



2.5 DIESEL, 5 SPEED, PAS, L W B, EXCEL CONVERSION SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH STEP, 12 SEMI HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON TAIL LIFT, V GOOD CONDITION, ONE OWNER

51 REG, VOLKSWAGEN LT28



2.5 TURBO DIESEL, PAS, SHORT WHEEL BASE, LOW ROOF, TWIN SIDE LOADING DOORS WITH STEP, 8 PASSENGER HIGH BACK SEATS WITH HEADREST, RICON TAIL LIFT, UNWIN TRACKING, MINT CONDITION ONE OWNER, 36,000 MILES. IDEAL TAXIS

X REG PEUGEOT BOXER



2.5 DIESEL, 5 SPEED, PAS, LONG WHEEL BASE, HIGH ROOF, SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH STEP, 12 SEMI HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON TAIL LIFT, V GOOD CONDITION, ONE OWNER

2001 Y REG RENAULT MASTER



MM33, 2.2 DCI, 5 SPEED, PAS, MWB, O & H CONVERSION SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH AVS STEP, 7 SEATS PLUS 2 WHEELCHAIR SPACES, RICON TAIL LIFT, UNWIN TRACKING, MINT CONDITION ONE OWNER

T REG IVECO 59.12



2.8 DIESEL TURBO, SEMI AUTOMATIC, MELLOR COACHBUILT BODY, P A S, 16 REMOVABLE SEMI HIGH BACK SEAT'S, UNWIN TRACKING, PLS FULLY AUTOMATIC TAIL LIFT, POWER DOOR FRONT ENTRY, ONE OWNER, EX LOCAL AUTHORITY, LOW MILES 66,000 KMS

2003 03 REG RENAULT TRAFFIC 100



1.9 DCI, 5 SPEED, PAS, SHORT WHEEL BASE, O & H CONVERSION, SIDE LOADING DOOR, 5 SEATS PLUS 1 WHEEL CHAIR, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER MINT CONDITION, 18,000 miles

T REG 1999 FORD TRANSIT 2.5 TD



MANUAL, CHASSIS DEVELOPMENT COACHBUILT BODY, P A S, 15 REMOVABLE SEMI HIGH BACK SEAT'S, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON UNDERFLOOR TAIL LIFT, SLIDING DOOR FRONT ENTRY, ONE OWNER, EX LOCAL AUTHORITY, 48,000 MILES

04 REG 2004 RENAULT MASTER T35



2.5, 5 SPEED, PAS, LONG WHEEL BASE, MELLOR CONVERSION SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH AVS STEP, 14 SEATS OR 10 PLUS 2 WHEEL CHAIRS, UNWIN TRACKING, RICON TAIL LIFT, MINT CONDITION, 16,000 MILES

VOLSWAGEN LT35 2.5 TURBO DIESEL



NEW UN REGISTERED, LWB, UPDATED TO 3850KGS GVW, 15 ABACUS HIGH BACK SEATS + DRIVER, SLIDING SIDE DOOR WITH AVS STEP, HIGH ROOF, UNWIN TRACKING, AMF PLS FULLY AUTOMATIC INTERNAL TAIL LIFT, NEW CONVERSION IN STOCK

52 REG RENAULT MASTER



LM35, 2.0 DCI, 5 SPEED, PAS, LWB, EUROMOTIVE CONVERSION SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH AVS STEP, 12 SEATS, GLIDE RITE LOWERING SUSPENSION WITH FOLD OUT RAMP, UNWIN TRACKING, MINT CONDITION ONE OWNER, 55,000 MILES

NEW 06 REG, IVECO 40.C13



2.9 TURBO DIESEL IRIS CONVERSION 14 HIGH BACK COGENT SEATS, DOUBLE FRONT PASSENGER SEAT, SIDE LOADING DOOR WITH AVS STEP, HIGH ROOF, M2 FLOOR, LOT'S OF SPACE, DELIVERY MILEAGE ONLY, IN STOCK.

2002 52 REG FORD TRANSIT 350



LONG WHEEL BASE, TURBO DIESEL, AUTOMATIC, PAS, HIGH ROOF SIDE ENTRY DOOR WITH STEP, 12 HIGH BACK SEATS, UNWIN TRACKING FOR 2 W/CHAIRS, RATCLIFF UNDERFLOOR TAIL LIFT, ONE OWNER, VERY LOW MILES 5500 MILES

NEW UN REGISTERED VOLKSWAGEN LT46



TURBO DIESEL, VDL KUSTER CONVERSION, 16 SEATS, LARGE POWER PLUG DOOR, HIGH ROOF, BONDED WINDOWS, LOW M2 FLOOR, M2 HIGH BACK SEATS 3 WHEEL CHAIR POSITIONS, TRACKING, HEATER, LOWERED FLOOR WITH FOLD OUT SIDE RAMP

R REG, MERCEDES SPRINTER 312D



2.8 TURBO DIESEL, UVG LAZER BODY, PAS, LWB, SIDE DOOR, TWIN YORK 4 STRETCHERS, WITH SEAT BACKS, BULK HEAD DOOR, EBERSPACHER HEATER, STROBE BLUES & SIREN, ONE OWNER, GOOD CONDITION, CHOICE OF 5

W REG IVECO TURBO DAILY CREWCAB



2.9 TURBO DIESEL, PAS, FITTED WITH DROPSIDE STEEL BODY TIPPER AND PTO WITH HEAVY DUTY AIR COMPRESSOR FOR KANGOO'S ETC ONLY 90HRS ORANGE LIGHT BAR AND TOOL LOCKER, ONE OWNER ONLY 43,000 MILES MINT CONDITION.

04 REG, VOLKSWAGEN LT35



MWB, 2.5 TURBO DIESEL 109 BHP, PAS, ADVANCED CONVERSION, SLD, 8 HIGH BACK SEATS + DRIVER, REAR BULK HEAD FITTED WITH MICROWAVE AND HANDWASH REAR STORAGE AREA WITH HAND WASH AND TOOL STORAGE, EX DEMO 16,000 MILES

02 REG, VOLKSWAGEN LT35



2.5 TURBO DIESEL 109 BHP, PAS, LUXURY SPEC FRANK GUY CONVERSION, TWIN SLD'S, TINTED WINDOWS, 10 HIGH BACK SEATS, OVER HEAD LOCKERS, WITH AIR & LAMPS REAR STORAGE AREA, EBERSPACHER CLIMATE CONTROL, EX DEMO 16,000 MILES

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2000 CITROEN RELAY DIESEL

17 Seat Minibus, LWB, SLD, highroof, full sound system, high back seats with three point belts, COIF and PSV, interior lighting, PAS.

£5,995



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02 Plate LDV Convoys Turbo Diesel

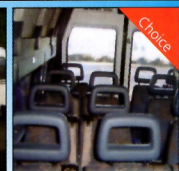
17 seat factory minibuses, LWB, PAS, high roof, SLD, 17 H/B seats with 3 point inertia belts, latest 2-4 T/D Dura Torque Ford engine + gearbox, interior lighting, full sound system, ready to go

£7,950

2005 (05) TURBO DIESEL

17 seat factory Minibus, LWB, High roof, SLD, latest spec Ford Tura Torque engine and gearbox, 3 point inertia belts, latest spec interior, interior lighting and full sound system, LOW MILEAGE

£12,995



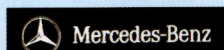
Choice

BRAND NEW MERCEDES CDI LUXURY SPEC MINICOACH

Front entry off side emergency exit, 16 H/B soft trim seats with 3 point inertia belts, roof vent, rear heater, large tinted windows, parcel shelves, interior reading lights with dim facility, full speaker sound system, walnut trim dash

REAR BOOT SPACE, BUILT & READY TO GO

£27,995



IVECO 65 C15 TURBO DIESEL

Wheelchair accessible minicoach, manual gearbox, 24 seater, front entry, power door, Frank Guy conversion, 24 removable seats all on tracking, full welfare spec, only done low mileage from new, under body cassette tail-lift with remote rear camera, massive savings on new price

Special Offer £37,500



Last 1 remaining

BRAND NEW MAXI EXTRA LWB MINICOACH WITH POWER DOOR

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FULL COIF AND PSV, 4 YEARS FULL WARRANTY AND READY TO GO TODAY

£24,995

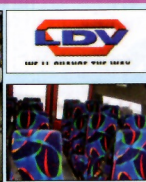


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In stunning metallic red, 17 H/B luxury soft trim seats with 3 point inertia belts, quad vent, large tinted windows, parcel shelves, interior lighting with dim facility, full sound system with 8 speaker HiFi stereo sound, front & rear heaters, full COIF + PSV till Jan 2007, Concept conversion

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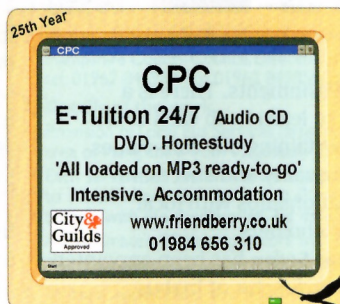
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10244/TR1

First for Astill

First Group man David Astill, 41, has been appointed to a challenging new role as commercial manager at First Potteries.

He assumes first line responsibility for all commercial activity, including the requirement for close and continuing liaison with the company's partners, particularly the five local authorities across the company's territory.

Astill said: "Under the present management team the company has been working hard on its business restructuring plan. However, it's a tough job and there's still a way to go before the levels of reliability and service we aim to deliver are routinely achieved. My new job includes monitoring the business's commercial aspects and making sure all our partners are fully involved and aware of what we're planning in terms of network development.

"It also includes managing the company's involvement when partner proposals for the network are being explored. It's a challenging job



David Astill is First Potteries' new commercial chief

but one I'm thoroughly enjoying."

A masters graduate (MSc) in Transport Planning and Management, David has 17 years bus industry experience with First and its predecessors. In his immediate previous appointment he was responsible for managing the intake of 40 East European drivers into the Crewe depot, and the relocation of that depot to new premises. Prior to that, he was general manager for First's bus operations in Chester and Wirral.



Francois Xavier Perin



Jodine Milne



Ian Soden

ON THE MOVE...

Francois Xavier Perin, chief executive of Transdev plc – the UK arm of French transport giant Transdev SA – has been promoted to head up all non-French Transdev plc operations. He is now responsible for Italy, Germany and Portugal, in addition to his present responsibilities of Australia and UK. 50% of the group's revenue now comes from business outside France.

Perin said: "Transdev has successfully developed in a number of different European legal and commercial

environments. There is a lot to learn from each while maintaining our core values for quality and successful relationships with local stakeholders."

Ian Soden has been appointed sales director at Irisbus.

Mr Soden has over 30 years of experience in the bus and coach industry and will report directly to Steve Paterson, UK director of Irisbus.

Soden said: "During the last four years I have worked closely with Irisbus and am looking forward to helping the company grow its presence in the UK bus sector. The Scolabus is already the best selling dedicated school bus on the market, and with more new

products coming on line all the time, I see a great potential for Irisbus UK."

For the last two years, Mr Soden has been an independent consultant to Irisbus prior to which he was general sales manager at Coach Europe.

Stagecoach East's new marketing manager is **Jodine Milne** – a marketing and languages graduate, who has spent the last seven years working in France and Switzerland.

She is new to the industry but has previous experience in finance and leisure, and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.

She is native to the North East, hailing from Sunderland, and can remember the company back when when it was called Busways.

Milne said: "The schedule is jam-packed with activities, there's not a month that doesn't have a campaign or promotion. It feels great to be able to apply my skills in local markets to which I have a genuine connection."

Two minute interview



Full name: Kerry Pitter

Age: 47

Occupation: Managing director, Coliseum Coaches Ltd

Is the PSV industry on its way up, down or static? I think static over the next few years but it does concern me who is going to pay for the extra training that will be required for new drivers coming into the trade.

Give the industry's business managers 10 words of helpful advice: Quote realistic rates for 2006 to include the fuel increases.

Who, in the last 50 years, has been most influential in the industry and why? Brian Souter – from bus driver to the owner of one of the biggest bus empires in the world, and Dave Parry, he created a niche market offering upmarket coach holidays and now runs a fleet of coaches that are the envy of any tour operator.

Which vehicle – coach, bus, motorcycle or car – do you love the most, and why? The new Neoplan Starliner is simply outrageous in its design and has managed what no other manufacturer has, to design a futuristic-looking coach that shouts "style" and "grace" to any potential traveller.

If you asked your best friend or partner, what would they say is your worst attribute?

My memory has never been that good... hence I have Post-It notes stuck everywhere as memory joggers!

Who would play you in the film version of the story of your life?

David Jason... Lovely Jubbly

Who would you have as your co-star? Anne Robinson as the accountant and traffic manager. 'You are the weakest driver... Goodbye!'

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For more information please contact John Sorrell at Hampshire County Council, on 01962 846216 or by email john.sorrell@hants.gov.uk

Environment Department, Hampshire County Council, The Castle Winchester SO23 8UD.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

SELECT TENDER LIST FOR LOCAL BUS SERVICES (STAGE CARRIAGE) AND SCHOOL BUS SERVICES IN HEDGE END, EASTLEIGH

The County Council is inviting tenders from suitably registered companies for the above bus services. Details of the tender are given below and the companies complying with paragraph 4 should obtain and return their tenders by the date in paragraph 6.

1. Name, address, telephone number and fax number of the contracting local authority.
 Hampshire County Council, Director of Environment, The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UD, tel: 01962 846988, fax: 01962 845855, Email: tina.godfrey@hants.gov.uk

2. Details of the work.

Provision of Local Bus Services (stage carriage) and school bus services in the Hedge End area of Hampshire from 02 January 2007 to 02 January 2011.

Each service will be tendered individually although tenderers will have the opportunity to submit alternative tenders to the service detail issues, provided that they generally comply with the specification set down by Hampshire County Council.

Approximately 29 bus operators will be invited to tender.

The total estimated value of the contract is £500,000.

3. Where applicable, the legal form to be assumed by the grouping of service providers winning the contract.

Joint and several liability.

4. Criteria for obtaining contract documents.

Certificate of Registration issued by the relevant Traffic Commissioner. Services must be provided under the terms of the 1985 Transport Act and can only be created by companies complying with the legal and operational requirements of the relevant Traffic Commissioner. A deed of guarantee may be required at award stage.

5. Criteria for the award of the contract.

The most economically advantageous tender in terms of price, previous operational record and quality standards. The County Council is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender. The basis for comparison of tenders will be to secure the required service by means of the most cost-effective and economic use of funds available to the County Council.

6. Other Information.

Tenders can be obtained from the address in paragraph 1.

Final date for receipt of tenders is 2pm on 20 March 2006.

The tenders will be opened by authorised officers of The Chief Executive's Department and should be valid for 60 days.

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